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CHRISTIAN O.

ALFABETO

18.

ESPAÑOL.

HERONISTAS



Alf.

KAIS. KÖN. HOF. BIBLIOTHEK



560-B

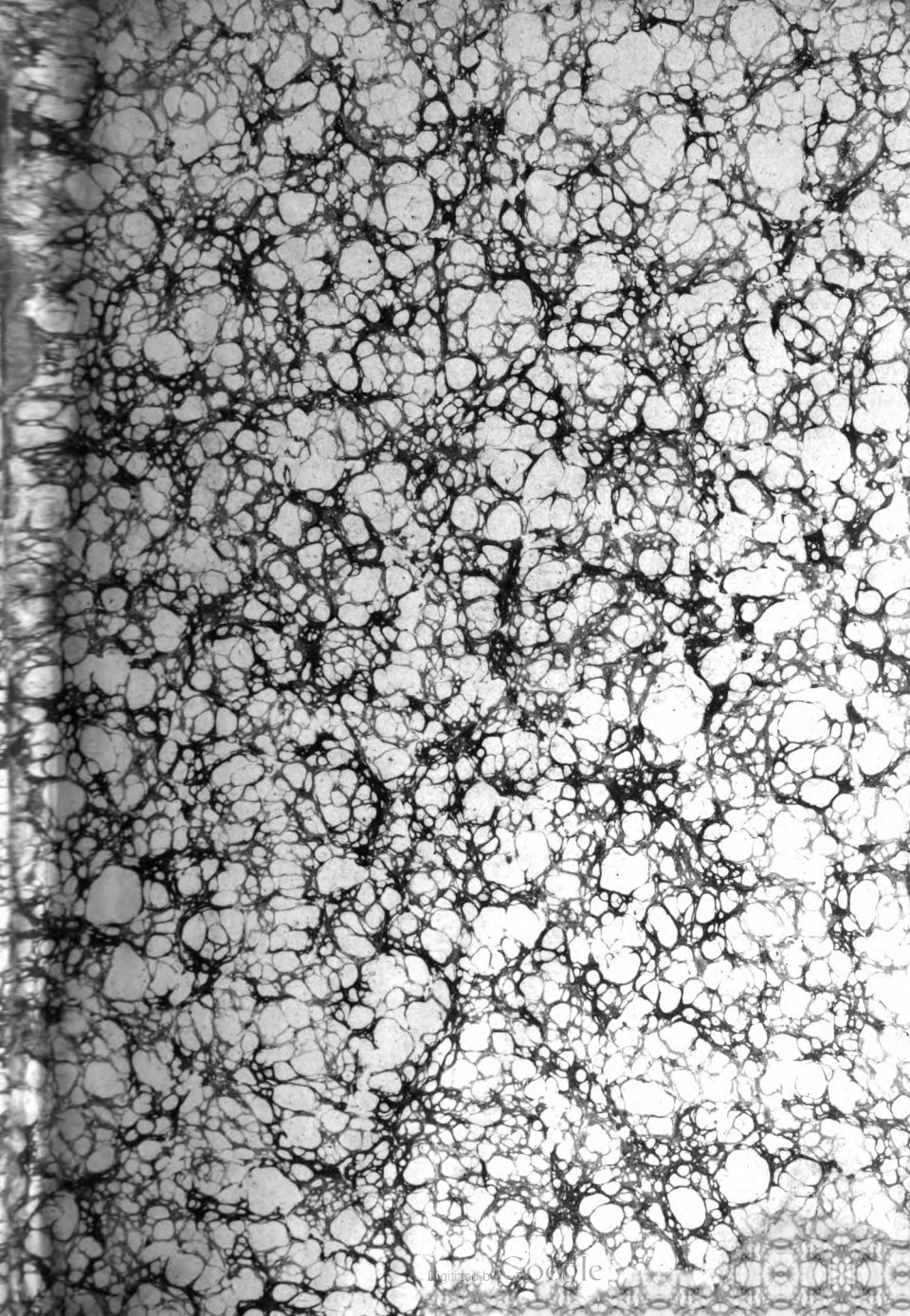
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**REFORMISTAS ANTIGUOS**  
**ESPAÑÓLES.**

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**TOMO XV.**

## OBRAS YA REIMPRESAS.

1	Fernando de Texeda. Carrascón .....	1633
2	Juan Perez. Epistola Consolatoria. Reimpresa por B. B. Wiffen .....	1560
3	Juan Perez? Imagen del Antecristo; i Carta a Felipe II. ....	1558?
4	Juan i Alfonso de Valdés. Dos Diálogos .....	1528-1530
5	R. G. de Montes. Artes de la Inquisizion.....	1567
6	Zipriano D. Valera. Dos Tratados: del Papa i de la Misa .....	1599
7	Juan Perez. Breve Tratado de Doctrina .....	1560
8	Zipriano D. Valera. Tratado a los Cautivos de Berberia .....	1594
	Aviso a los de la Iglesia Romana.....	1600
	Sacharles. Español Reformado .....	1621
9	Juan de Valdés. Ziento i diez Consideraziones.....	1550
10-11	Juan de Valdés. Dos Epistolas de S. Pablo. Declaradas por .....	1556-1557
12	Francisco de Enzinas? Dos Informaziones: i una Suplicazión por Perez?.....	1559
13	R. G. Montanus. Inquisitionis Hispanicæ Artes .....	1567
14	Zipriano D. Valera. Instituzion Religiosa; por Calvino .....	1597
*15	Juan de Valdés. Alfabeto Christiano. Italiano, Español e Inglés .....	1546

También se ha reimpreso la obra filológica de  
Juan de Valdés titulada Diálogo de la Lengua... 1533?

\* 15 SE HAN IMPRESO, I NO PARA VENTA PÚBLICA,  
SOLOS 150 EJEMPLARES; I 20 EN PAPEL DE MARCA.



# ALFABETO CHRISTIANO



# ALFABETO CHRISTIANO

BY

JUAN DE VALDÉS.

A FAITHFUL REPRINT OF THE ITALIAN OF 1546:

WITH TWO MODERN TRANSLATIONS,

IN SPANISH AND IN ENGLISH.

"VALDESSIO HISPANUS SCRIPTORE SUPERBIAT ORBIS."



LONDON. MDCCCLXI.



*Et principio quidem eo te modo docere incipiam, quo solent pueri institui in scholis, hoc est, quoddam tibi SPIRITUALE tradam ALPHABETUM. — VITA D. JOANNIS TAVLERI. OPERA OMNIA. PARIS. 1623.*

[The pious layman, instructing Tauler in the way of Christian perfection, says to him:]

I will do, then, as schoolmasters are accustomed to do to their children when they first go to be instructed,—they set them forward with the alphabet, and so shall I do to thee. I shall first propose to thee a SPIRITUAL ALPHABET.—LIFE OF JOHN TAULER, AND ALFABETO CHRISTIANO, p. 7.

*Et voglio sgannarvi in questo, che io non vi dò queste regole, perche stiate legata ad esse, perche la 'ntentione mia è, che non vi serviate di loro, se non come d'uno ALFABETO CHRISTIANO, per mezzo del quale possiate venire alla perfettione christiana.—ALFABETO CHRISTIANO, fo. 44v<sup>o</sup>.*

I wish to undeceive you in this, that I do not give you these rules that you should be bound to them, because my intention is that you should use them only as a CHRISTIAN ALPHABET, by means of which you may come to Christian perfection.—ALFABETO CHRISTIANO, p. 125.

(NOT PUBLISHED: ONLY 150 COPIES PRINTED, AND 20 ON LARGE PAPER.)

## TO LUIS DE USOZ I RIO.

THE ALFABETO CHRISTIANO is a book unknown even to bibliographers for the last three centuries. It had its origin in an actual conversation between Juan de Valdés, twin brother to the Latin Secretary of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and Giulia Gonzaga, Duchess of Trajetto and Countess of Fondi, at Naples, about the close of 1535 or the beginning of the following year. At her request it was immediately afterwards written down by him in Spanish, to promote her instruction and refresh her memory. It now essentially conveys to us the spirit and substance of the conversation in the precise form and manner in which it then took place between them.

To whom can I address the English translation of this interesting dialogue with greater propriety than to him who, by first directing my thoughts into this channel of literary research, may almost be considered

to have been its discoverer? A friendship whose sincerity seeks no compliment and whose freedom asks no favours save those which advance the common object of our pursuit, might of itself afford a sufficient motive. Yet to these considerations may be super-added the fact, that his liberality has furnished the means also to give the work to the press; and to render it at the same time more worthy of acceptance to the Spanish reader, by accompanying the Italian, now the only original text, with a careful translation into Spanish, he has restored it once more to the language in which it was originally written. The Spanish manuscript of this treatise, like that of the *Ciento i diez Consideraciones*, not having been printed, very early perished, leaving the Italian versions to serve as the texts for all the succeeding translations of both these valuable compositions. You are aware how amply an inquiry directed to this section of writers has been rewarded by the discovery of other works of their pens, either wholly forgotten, or of such rare occurrence as to be all but unique. I may point with pleasure to fresh editions restoring to them a renewed existence; and readers may now turn to translations of some of them from the Latin or Italian into their authors' native tongue, as in the present instance; thus giving them another country and the mind of another people for their range and perusal. In the first place, for example,

beside the present volume, I may mention those of Perez, Valera, and Enzinas; and in the second place those of Montes, Sacharles, and Valdés (1). Led now by the example afforded by the last-named writer in the form of an epistle, to no one with so much propriety and pleasure as to yourself could I inscribe the present translation into English, together with such remarks as have arisen upon the original volume, the dialogue, and the speakers introduced in it: not, however, that such observations will add to your information on the subject, but as a convenient form in which to introduce it to other readers; because it must be confessed that much mistake and confusion are to be found in the notices hitherto supplied by the best writers respecting the present author and his works.

Accept, therefore, this offering of secluded labour, in the course of which I acknowledge to have gathered some grateful lessons of instruction for myself, and which has softened not a few of the languid hours of failing years and declining energies.

I selected the original copy of the ALFABETO CRISTIANO from the "Catalogue" of Giovanni Gancia, bookseller, of Brighton, in the year 1851, not having any previous knowledge of the book, and attracted to it solely by its title. On one of the fairest mornings

of the most charming month of the year, the modern book-post, that beneficent handmaid of advancing knowledge, brought and laid the volume upon my breakfast-table. You will doubtless remember how freely, while seated beside it, the eye through the open window expatiates over the beauties of nature, unrolled like a picture before it, for you also have looked from the same retreat upon the same delightful landscape. It is spread along the course of a small valley enriched by the labours of careful husbandry and picturesque with noble woods, church spires, and cheerful villages. Nestled on the edge of the woods, at one end of the vale, is seen the native town of the translator of your national poet Garcilaso de la Vega who when returning from the African expedition in 1535 with Charles the Fifth, made acquaintance with Juan de Valdés at Naples ; while at the other extremity of the valley rises the hill whereon stood the royal mansion at which Henry the Eighth was domiciled when he received the compliment of the golden rose and the title of "Defender of the Faith" from the Pope for his book against Luther ; and whence he dictated his letter of thanks to Leo. There, too, Catherine of Aragon, aunt of Charles the Fifth, was residing when she was summoned to attend the commissioners of divorce at Dunstable. With these recollections, and with this scene in view, at the first temperate refection of



the morning, alone, and with nothing to divert my mind from the quiet examination of the newly-acquired volume, I made my first acquaintance with its contents. I had completed, the year before, a transcript of the *Cento et dieci divine Considerationi*, 1550. This had rendered me familiar with the style of Valdés and his peculiar mode of thinking; so that the perusal of a few pages convinced me that this could be no other than a work written by him and one altogether unknown. It left no doubt in the mind, moreover, that the real interlocutors were Giulia Gonzaga and Juan de Valdés himself; and I felt a pleasing conviction that whilst it would assist in clearing up the uncertainty which had hitherto attached to their personal relations with each other, it might also furnish some further indications of their natural characters and dispositions. A week of agreeable leisure was absorbed in its perusal, and resulted in the present attempt to make the English reader a partaker of the gratification it had afforded me.

When the book first came into my hands it was in the original vellum wrapper; half of both covers had been cut away and supplied by paper. The cleanliness of the edges showed that it had been preserved with no inconsiderable care; my experience, and the condition of the volume, suggested the conjecture that it had been preserved, during the three centuries

which had intervened since its publication, in some southern library, where damp and smoke were comparatively unknown. I was told, however, that it came from the collection of a deceased German Bishop, sold by his nephew. Bound up with the *ALFABETO CHRISTIANO* were two other treatises by another author, a disciple of Valdés, but of Calvinistic opinions,—a disciple of Valdés in the sense in which Ochino and Peter Martyr were his disciples, not in that of Flaminio and Carnesecchi. The treatises are:—

1. *Opere christiane e catholiche di Messer Hieronymo Savonese, A gloria d' Iddio, et utilita de christiani stampate.* Colophon: *In Gineura, per Lorenzo Merlino e Fratelli. Nel MD.XXXXIII. a li xxii. di Nouembre Stampata.* (124 leaves, sm. 8vo., Italic letter.) It consists of six doctrinal epistles written to individuals from various cities of Italy which the writer visited—Milan, Verona, Naples, Bologna, Rome, and Mantua—between April 1542 and March 1543.
2. *Pie et christiane epistole, composte da uno seruo di Iddio alla consolatione de fedeli frategli in Christo Giesu Signore, e Saluatore nostro. Della fede. Della efficacia della fede. Delle opere. De meriti. Della charità. Impossibile*

*è senza fe de piacere à Iddio. Pavlo agli Ebrei, cap. xi.* (Without place or date, thirty-six leaves, sm. 8vo., in Roman letter.) They comprise five doctrinal pastoral epistles, as the title shows, each having the same exordium: *A i diletti frategli, in Christo Giesu, il Seruo di Christo, gratia, e pace dal Signore.*

The author of these treatises, according to Vergerio, was Giulio da Milano (2). Before parting with the volume, I caused it to be bound in green morocco, adding to it another brochure which came about the same time, and under nearly similar circumstances, into my hands.

3. *Regola vtile e necessaria a ciascuna persona che cerchi di uiuere come fedele e buon Christiano. Nuouamente stampata. Con uno Capitolo deuotissimo di Messer Iesu Christo. Composto per il Signor Bartolomeo Caroli Nobile Sanese. Colophon: In Vinegia, per Bartholamio da Lodrone ditto l'Imperador, e Francesco Venetiano. M.D.XXXIII.* (Sixteen leaves, sm. 8vo., Italic letter.)

This tract professes to describe the "life of a truly Christian gentleman," as related by himself in the last hours of his life. It is an *alumbrado* tract,

conceived in the better sense of the term ; and that which invests it with peculiar interest is, that it inculcates the sentiments of the ALFABETO CRISTIANO ; not indeed with the lucid eloquence and clearness of Valdés, for it seems to be rather an imaginary life, in a form of narrative selected as a vehicle of the opinions conveyed therein ; and professes to have been dictated by a desire to point out the true path to the aspirations of the pious inquirer. As, however, it embraces general views similar to those of Valdés, and contains various passages expressed almost in his own words, it leaves no doubt on the mind that the writer of the tract was well acquainted with this work. And as the ALFABETO CRISTIANO was not printed until 1546 and the tract was issued in 1543, three years before, I should infer that its author must have had access to the manuscript before it appeared in print. There were several admirers of Valdés residing at Sienna,—Ochino, Lattanzio Rangone, Paleario,—and, for another, the name of Caroli may have been an assumed one, like that of Hieronymo Savonese. It will be seen, therefore, that this small volume of original pieces now consists of four distinct parts ; and I am thus precise in describing it here, in order that the copy now in my hands may be identified in future, no other being at present known ; and that it may be distinguished from any others which may hereafter be discovered. The

ALFABETO CHRISTIANO of Valdés is not to be confounded with other books having a similar title; for example, the “*Alphabetum Christi seu virtutes quæ adolescentes ornant* a Ralph. Sadlero: Monacæ, 1619; Dilingæ, 1624;” and another in English, “*The Christian Alphabet*: London, 1811;” books of a totally different character; nor have we any other reason to suppose that it was translated into Latin than that the title of *Alphabetum Christianum* appears in the prohibitory indices down to the latest folio one of Madrid in 1845, whilst the Italian title by which it has now become known has been suppressed after the *Catalogo* drawn up by Giovanni della Casa at Venice in 1549. It stands in that catalogue, followed by two tracts, also anonymous, which we know, on the authority of Vergerio, were written by Valdés, and must have been published about the same time:—

*Alfabeto Christiano.*

*Modo di tenere nell' insegnare, et nel predicare  
al principio della religione Christiana (3).*

*Qual maniera si douerebbe tenere in formare  
i figliuoli de Christiani nella christiana  
religione.*

Here Vergerio merely quotes the titles as they stood in Della Casa's catalogue, — “*La expositione della Oratione del Signore*,” and just after “*Alfabeto*

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Christiano," followed by "Modo di tenere," &c., and "Qual maniera si douerebbe tenere," &c., without any allusion to the author. In his further remarks in another place he expressly mentions that the two latter tracts were written by Valdés, giving a description of them; whilst he is silent about the ALFABETO CHRISTIANO, which he must have known equally with the others. The cause of this silence was doubtless that one of the parties to the dialogue was yet living. With a prudence which in this respect he observed in other instances, he forbore to draw attention to a book that would compromise with Valdés so well-known and high-born a personage as the Duchess of Trajetto. It was printed at a time when for a few years the press of Venice was comparatively free, and when taking advantage of this liberty, then existing nowhere else in Italy, it multiplied the tracts of the Reformation by thousands. When the friends of Valdés were afterwards persecuted at Naples, and his name condemned by the authority of Rome; implicating by connection with him one of the most distinguished members of the noble family of the Gonzagas, all parties, friends equally with opponents, would of course be concerned to observe silence on the subject, whilst all the friends of the family would be urged alike by religious sentiment and by family considerations to destroy silently and irrecoverably every copy of a book that appeared to cast, by its



association with her name, the shadow of its principles upon those who were allied to her. It is not then surprising that no notice of its existence has been conveyed to us by those who could have given, if it were only in the way of reprobation, the most certain knowledge of its contents. We can only wonder that amongst the few which might have been saved, even about the period of its issue, any stray copy of a book devoted by so many motives to destruction, should have outlived all its hazards, and that, by circumstances apparently casual, an exceptional copy should have been preserved to become multiplied and perpetuated at the present day. The danger of being known to possess these books of Valdés and of other Italian reformers, the manner in which some of them have been buried for ages, and the circumstances under which they were preserved to come forth as to a resurrection of fresh life, are shown by a circumstance mentioned by M'Crie, from Fontanini, who tells us, "on taking down an old house at Urbino, in the year 1728, the workmen disinterred a copy of Bruccioli's Paraphrase of Paul's Epistles, with some books of Ochino, Valdés, and others of the same kind, which had remained in concealment for more than a century and a half" (4).

If I were to indicate any individual more than another to whom may be attributed the preservation of the writings of Juan de Valdés, I should certainly

point to Pietro Carnesecchi as the person to whom the distinction is due. He held them in the highest estimation. He had the most favourable opportunities of obtaining and protecting them; he was the cherished friend of Cardinals Pole, Sadolet and Bembo, and of Marcantonio Flaminio. He had been secretary to Clement the Seventh, and afterwards Prothonotary to the Apostolic See. One of his preferments was an abbey at Naples; he possessed also an abbey in France, passing between them at his pleasure, sometimes by way of Florence or Venice, occasionally by that of Geneva and Lyons. After the death of Clement he retired from the Roman Court to Naples, where he became intimate with Juan de Valdés. He was in that city in December 1540, the year in which Valdés died; and if he did not himself receive his last confession, which is very probable, he at least knew what it was, for his commendation of it formed part of the accusation against him on his trial in 1567 before the Inquisition at Rome; and after the death of Valdés he succeeded to the confidence of Giulia Gonzaga. His correspondence brought her also under the suspicion of the Inquisition on two occasions; once in 1545, and again, a short time before her death, in 1566. He was at the same time accused of having been indoctrinated at Naples from the year 1540, with principles adverse to the Romish faith, by Valdés, Ochino,

Flaminio and Galeazzo Caracciolo; of having had intercourse with them, reading the book of the *Beneficio di Christo* and the *writings* of Valdés; and in the following year, December 1541, at Viterbo, treating about the same with Flaminio, Vittore Soranzo, Bishop of Bergamo, with Apollonio Merenda, and Luigi Priuli. The accusation further charges against him that afterwards in Venice he held communication with P. P. Vergerio and with Lattanzio Rangone of Sienna, the latter a disciple of Valdés; that he made mention of having at Venice the *books* and interdicted *writings* of Valdés at the house of an accomplice, who, notwithstanding their prohibition by the Holy Office, preserved them in order to circulate them by getting them "printed and published, or at least that they might be concealed and preserved." When Vergerio finally withdrew from Italy in October 1548, he carried with him the MS. of the Italian translation of the *Cento et dieci divine Considerationi*, and got it printed and published in May 1550 at Basle, with a prefatory commendation by Celio Secondo Curione. When Carnesecchi shortly afterwards went to France, going and returning in 1551-2, he passed through Lyons; in that city, and at Paris, and in the Court he introduced from Italy a book by Valdés, and presented it as a gift. The French translation of the *Considerationi* was printed at Lyons in 1563, and again in Paris in

1565, for which his previous visits would seem to have prepared the way by his recommendation and introduction of copies of the edition in Italian. Carnesecchi is accused of having received letters from Lyons and Geneva, and of having in 1564 arranged with an old friend who was associated with him, as keeper of the books and *writings* of Valdés, that they should be sent to himself by safe conveyance to Venice, being anxious as well to preserve them as to deliver that person from the danger which threatened him from having them in his possession (5). The distinction made between the *writings* and *books*, and the circumstances respecting them, evidently show that Carnesecchi had the authorised care and possession of the manuscripts or "writings," or probably the Italian translations, and that he diligently promoted the printing of them at Venice; and it is scarcely to be doubted that he was also concerned in those editions which issued also at Basle, Lyons and Paris, and Geneva (6). To him, therefore, we may fairly attribute the first publication at Venice of the present work.

We are not certain who was the Italian translator of the *Cento e dieci Considerationi* from the Spanish of Valdés; it was probably prepared at Naples, where at that period the Spanish and Italian languages were equally cultivated by lettered persons. We should hardly attribute so calm and patient a work to one

of Vergerio's restless temper, although to him Carne-secchi might reasonably commit the charge to carry it into Switzerland and to get it printed there. The presence at Venice of the Pope's legate, Giovanni della Casa, who was sent to discover and suppress such publications, and who was pursuing his enquiries in order to draw up his prohibitory Catalogue, would effectually prevent the printing there of other works of the same class after the year 1546. The dedication on the reverse of the Italian title of the present work at least proves that its Italian translator from the original MS. of Valdés was Marco Antonio Magno of Naples, who served Giulia Gonzaga in the capacity of *Procuratore*, or chief agent; nor may it be far from the mark to connect the translations of the other pieces by Valdés with him and Carnesecchi. The *Due Dialoghi*, by the brothers Valdés, was also printed at Venice in 1545, the year preceding, with a dedication addressed to Virgilio Caracciolo, signed "Il Clario" (Isidore Clario). This volume had a large and rapid circulation, passing through six editions at the least, which may yet be distinguished by a careful comparison from each other. Alarm, however, was early taken by the printer; the name of Clario was suppressed, and the signature Gioan Antonio di Padoua substituted; afterwards the dedication was wholly omitted; in some copies its place was partially supplied on the first sheet by expanding

the space of the following pages. While the *Due Dialoghi* was rapidly circulating from Venice, the "Alphabeto Christiano" was being printed there, in the same year that Carnesecchi was the first time cited to Rome; and this circumstance checked the printing of the remaining works in that city. Dismissing these preliminary remarks, we will now advert as briefly as may be to the two eminent individuals whose colloquy forms the substance of the present volume.

### JUAN DE VALDÉS.

According to the inconvenient practice of translating proper names of persons and places into the form of the language in which they were used, rather than of retaining them in their native orthography, the name of Juan de Valdés has been variously written; thus, Johannes Valdesius, *Lat.*; Giovanni Valdesso, *Ital.*; Jan de Val D'Esso, *Fr.*; and John Valdesso, *Engl.*, were originally simply Juan de Valdés, *Spanish*.

Hernando de Valdés was perpetual *Regidor* of Cuenca, a city of New Castile, towards the close of the fifteenth century (7). He was a *mayorazgo*, or hereditary proprietor, and if not a personage of high degree, he was an *hidalgo*, of liberal fortune,

and independent circumstances. It has been conjectured that he took a favourable part with the *Comunidades* when they rose to assert their liberties, but lost them with Padilla on the fatal field of Villalar; and that the following *copla* was composed by him in reference to the independent position he then held and continued to maintain.

“*Diez marcos tengo de oro*” (8).

Ten marks of gold for the telling,  
 And of silver I have nine score,  
 Good houses are mine to dwell in,  
 And I have a rent-roll more;  
 My line and lineage please me,  
 Ten squires I count at my call,  
 And no lord who flatters or fees me,  
 Which pleases me more than they all.

He had two sons, born about the end of the century, named Alfonso and Juan. They were twin brothers, who, as they grew up and arrived at middle life, were so identical in person, mind, and manners, that they were scarcely to be distinguished unless seen together, and were liable to be mistaken one for the other when seen apart even by those who were intimately acquainted with them. Juan Gines de Sepulveda, historiographer to Charles the Fifth, writing from Rome, Sept. 7th (1531?), in reply to a letter from Alfonso, recommending his brother Juan to his notice and good offices, says:—

b 3

You ask me to receive your brother in the same manner as yourself, if he should come to me. Can I receive him otherwise, when as I look at him, whether he is standing or sitting, whether he is speaking or silent, in short, whether he is in action or doing nothing, I fancy that I am looking upon yourself? And, what is no less remarkable, he so closely represents you, not in features alone, but also in talents, learning, manners, and even in his pursuits, that again and again he appears to be your very self and not your brother (9).

This identity of personal appearance may have been one cause of their being mistaken and confounded with each other by their contemporaries, and may have led writers afterwards to the junction of their names in one, as Juan-Alfonso, which has occasionally been adopted (10). They received a liberal education according to the period, when learning was still struggling with her fetters; and to judge from their writings and from the duties that occupied them, Alfonso may have addressed his studies to jurisprudence and Latin composition; Juan to his native language and the originals of the sacred Scriptures, Hebrew and Greek. And if Alfonso, afterwards mixing more intimately in public affairs and the business of life, drew his moral and religious improvement from the writings of Erasmus, to whom he was ardently attached, Juan evidently imbibed his, like Erasmus himself, from the direct fountain of the sacred writings. They were not versed in the



commentaries of the schools ; and in this respect the brother reformers had an advantage, that they were not theologians, and thus had not afterwards, in the self-taught progress of their minds, to unlearn the doubts and reasonings of sophistical formulas. They regarded religion not as a system or a science, but rather as practical morality, divinely exalted and enlightened ; as inspired doctrine, having its existence in the daily conduct of life by Faith.

They were both well acquainted with Erasmus, and were strongly attached to him and he to them. Alfonso de Valdés laboured in every way for his interest with the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and to protect his name from the attacks of the friars and his works from prohibition with which they threatened them ; especially when in 1527 the *Enchiridion*, which had been printed in Spain in Latin, appeared at Alcala in a handsome quarto in the language of the people. When Dr. Juan Perez, the Emperor's resident at Rome during the sack of the city, procured from Clement the Seventh a brief dated the 1st August, 1527, for Don Alonso Manrique, Archbishop of Seville and Inquisitor-General, that he might silence, under pain of excommunication, any one who spoke against the works of Erasmus, he was directed by the Grand Chancellor to send it to Secretary [Alfonso de] Valdés, as one who best knew its purpose and application (11). But the friars proved in the end too

strong for the friends of Erasmus. After the death of Cardinal Manrique, some of his works which were then circulating in Spanish were prohibited; and the brothers themselves had in a short time to rejoice in their escape from the dangers that were preparing for them in Spain, although they were never again to see their native country. I but anticipate this circumstance in order to quote two brief letters from Erasmus to Juan de Valdés, which express the character of their friendship, and clearly establish the twinship and similarity of the brothers: the latter alludes to this threatened danger, and his escape from it.

*D. Erasmus to Juan de Valdés.*

Most accomplished youth. Your brother, Alfonso Valdés, has conferred so much obligation upon me, that I ought to love whatever in any way belongs to him. But [besides this] you, as I hear, are so like him both in personal appearance and readiness of mind, that you might seem to be not TWINS, but one individual. I think it very proper, therefore, to love you both alike. I hear that you are given to liberal studies, in order that you may embellish your naturally virtuous disposition with every sort of adornment. Why, then, should any one exhort you to study when of your own accord you follow this excellent pursuit? It is more to the purpose to congratulate and praise you. Rest assured that I am no one's more than your brother's, and not less thine than his. Farewell.

Basle, 1st March, 1528.

*D. Erasmus to Juan de Valdés.*

How sensibly I feel, my dear Valdés, to learn by your letter what great troubles and dangers have afflicted you ; and yet, on the other part, how lively was my satisfaction to know that you had escaped this shipwreck safely, and already found yourself secure in port ! I greatly regret to behold Spain afflicted with so many evils. Oh that God would turn the hearts of kings to the love of peace ! Do not grieve, my dear youth, nor address to me excuses for your long silence. Always consider the letter I write to your brother as written to yourself, and I shall always reckon his answer as your letter, for in my view you are not merely TWINS, but I conceive you are rather one single person than two bodies. That you should hold a note so slightly written as mine, to be one of your chief literary jewels, I quite appreciate ; and, on my side, my dear Juan, I shall treasure with great esteem the memory of a mind so amiable and pure as yours in the depth of my heart. It cannot, then, be less grateful to me to know that there are so many good men in Spain who heartily love me. And, on the other part, it gives me pain that, in a country favoured with so many privileges, such nests of vicious hornets multiply there, that, not to me alone, but to them also whom I love, they should cause such painful disturbance ; and I regret your share of it almost more than my own. From my heart I congratulate myself for you and for as many Spaniards as are like you, because I see that you consecrate all your efforts and studies to the culture of letters, always conducing to promote the sincerity of Christian piety and to unite them to it, which has not been done by many among the Italians until now. What worth have learning and letters if they draw the mind away from religion ! Farewell (12).

Basle, 21st March, 1529.

Martir Rizo, in his History of Cuenca, informs us that one of the brothers rose to be Secretary to the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and that the other became *camarero*, Gentleman of the Chamber, to the Pontiff. This would be Adrian the Sixth, previously Cardinal of Tortosa and tutor to Charles. Adrian of Utrecht was a man of unblemished reputation, upright, pious, active, very serious, full of benevolence and pure intentions, a lover of Flemish art and polite learning, and a friend and protector of Erasmus from the attacks of the bigots of the schools and "saints of the world." He sought to bring about the peace and concord of the nations of Europe. He was a decided advocate for the reformation of the Church, in which abominable practices had found a place near the "holy chair;" abuses in spiritual things, exorbitant straining of prerogative, everything turned to evil. Adrian set to work with scrupulous conscientiousness, yet he disappointed innumerable expectations, for his pontificate lasted but about a year, so that he had time to do little more than disturb abuses and encounter opposition; and Juan de Valdés could have remained but a short time in his service and confidence. He refers in all probability to this circumstance in his fifty-first "consideration," in which he endeavours to explain in what manner God makes Himself to be felt, by a parable of the order and dependence of the Pontiff's house, where all that dwell

in it are dependent upon him, are sustained by him, and the Pontiff dying, the whole household breaks up; "so that he that was secretary is secretary no longer, and the same of all the other officers of the household, who, on the Pontiff's death, lose the being which his life gave them" (13). Short as this connection with Adrian must necessarily have been, it would be long enough for an intelligent and observant youth to become, under such a man, well acquainted with the state of things at Rome; to have had his mind directed to the reformation of morals and manners while in the very field of corruption; and to learn the features of those special evils which are drawn with so much clearness of outline in the *Dialogo: en que 'particularmente se tratan las cosas acaecidas en Roma el año de 1527*, a dialogue in which the circumstances are particularly discussed which occurred at Rome in 1527, apparently arranged by Juan de Valdés, but circulated and acknowledged as a work by his brother (14).

Alfonso had risen to the appointment of Latin Secretary in Ordinary to the Emperor in the Chancery of Valladolid under Mercurino de Gattinara, a Piedmontese, formerly President of Burgundy, made Grand Chancellor in 1518. He accompanied the Emperor's court to Germany in 1520, and was at the Diet of Worms in 1521. He addressed to Pedro Martir de Angleria in Spain an account of the religious disputes

in Germany, from the time of Luther's declaration against indulgences to the close of the Diet of Worms (15). Under direction of the Chancellor, Alfonso prepared several tracts in defence and justification of the Emperor in the face of Europe: on the capture of Francis the First of France at the battle of Pavia in 1521; on his release from captivity and the cartel of defiance sent to the Emperor; and on the evasions and intrigues of Pope Clement the Seventh which led to the sack of Rome in 1527(16). Besides these publications, which were strictly political and put forth under the Chancellor by official authority of the government, in opposition to the endeavours of the Pope's Nuncio to prevent them, Alfonso and Juan drew up two politico-religious treatises, having the same object in view, the justification of the Emperor's policy; one relating to the King of France, the other to the Pope his ally; both combining with the political narration of events the inculcation of sentiments designed to promote a sincere reformation of religion and the Church. In these, the marks of the hand of Juan are seen chiefly in reference to the religious parts. Altogether they leave us in no doubt that both the brothers were concerned in their composition. The primary aim and purpose were Alfonso's; he furnishing the documentary parts and argument, whilst Juan made the arrangement, filled up the characters and pointed the religious application. These two pieces,

cast into the form of dialogues, are no less remarkable for their chaste elegance of style and graceful turns of wit and argument than for their truthful illustration of contemporary history. In the *Dialogo de Mercurio y Caron*, the character of Wolsey is shown in its well-known colours as viewed by the Spanish court, and it contains a Spanish translation from Latin of a letter from the Emperor to Henry the Eighth. It was however the *Dialogo de Lactancio y un Arce-diano*, treating of the circumstances which brought on and attended the sack of Rome, that most affected the fortunes of the brothers, because it prevented them from continuing to reside in Spain. The work was composed while the events were fresh on everybody's tongue, and was carefully considered before it was put forth. It was submitted to the judgment and revision of several members of the Emperor's Council,—Matteo Aleman, his Secretary; Don Juan Manuel, who had been his resident at Rome; the Grand Chancellor Mercurino de Gatinara; also to some of the most eminent theologians and professors,—the Archbishop of Toledo's Confessor; Pedro de Lerma, High Chancellor of the University of Alcala, and others distinguished for their learning and enlightened sentiments; being chiefly those who favoured the writings of Erasmus. The precautions thus taken to fence it round with the pale of Romish orthodoxy were not sufficient for its protection. While it yet circulated privately in manu-

script amongst the author's friends, the Apostolic Nuncio to the Court of Spain, Baldassare Castiglione, procured a copy of it, after much diligence, through his secretary, as it appears from Alfonso himself; and having read it, he immediately denounced it together with the writer to the Emperor as at once libellous to the person of the Pontiff and profane and impious towards the Church. This denunciation coming to the ears of Valdés, he wrote a smart letter to the Nuncio, in which he acknowledged the authorship and gave particulars about it that now have become interesting as relating to our subject (17). The Nuncio returned a long reply both to the letter and the work, composed of weak argument and personal abuse,—insults of the grossest kind that could be offered to a Spaniard; joined with threats to bring the power of the Inquisition upon him; then less directed by the Inquisitor-General than by the mob of ignorant friars, from whom neither the Chancellor nor the Emperor himself could long have shielded the brothers, or have protected them from the consequence of a service performed by their knowledge and in defence of their policy. These were the circumstances that drove Juan from Spain, and which by directing his course to Naples, led to his acquaintance with Giulia Gonzaga in that city, and consequently to the production of the work before us. Some palliation may be found for the intemperate character of



Castiglione's philippic, in the consciousness of the disastrous position to which he felt that his diplomatic affairs were committed. He had seen his acknowledged talents, his diplomacy and counsel disconcerted in Spain; his credit with the Consistory of Rome ruined; the Pope, his master, brought to the verge of dishonour in the sight of the Catholic world, and of ridicule among the German Powers; and to his unsuccessful negotiations rather than to the crooked ambition of the Church of Rome Clement attributed the sack of the metropolis of Christendom. As a disheartened and baffled ambassador under the irritation of declining health, the suavity of the man of fine manners, of the model *courtier*, was scarcely to be found under the control of his better judgment; whilst death, he saw, was fast advancing to enshroud his bright and flattered career in undisguised disgrace. He died shortly afterwards at Toledo, on the 13th February, 1529.

His death and the departure of the Emperor from Spain in the following month, to be crowned at Bologna, and thence to proceed to Germany, relieved the brothers from the imminent danger which impended over them,—that danger of which Erasmus speaks in his letter to Juan. Alfonso accompanied the Emperor's Court. On the journey from Bologna he lost his patron, Mercurino de Gattinara, who died at Inspruck in May, 1530, whilst on his way to

attend the Diet of Augsburgh. On the 18th of June, Alfonso de Valdés, accompanied by his co-secretary, Cornelius Schepper, a Belgian who had been in the service of the King of Denmark, sought an interview with Melancthon respecting the principles professed by the Lutheran reformers, in order to disabuse the Emperor's mind of the gross perversions instilled into it by the Spanish friars and controversialists. Melancthon drew up the Confession of Augsburgh which Valdés translated into Spanish, and it was also translated into the Walloon language for the Emperor's perusal. On the 1st November, 1531, we find him writing from Brussels to Sepulveda at Rome, recommending his brother Juan to his notice, who had already been favourably received by him in that city. Mention is made of him in a letter written by Erasmus from Friburg without date, addressed to Cornelius Schepper, co-secretary with Valdés, to enquire about him:—

Matters with me are obstinately bad; my life is even in danger. I beg you to let me know what has happened to Alfonso Valdés. For these many months he writes not a word. Either he is sick, or he is banished, or he is entirely altered towards me. I pray you also to let our Livinius know. So much have I written with difficulty, my Cornelius (18).

He remained with the Emperor's Court during the whole of the year 1532 and the early part of 1533,

probably up to the time when the Emperor left Bologna on the 28th of February, or it may have been up even to his embarkation at Genoa for Spain on the 9th of April. After the early part of the year 1533 we certainly lose all sight of Alfonso de Valdés.

Francisco de Enzinas being in prison at Brussels for having printed his Spanish New Testament in 1543, is addressed in the language of warning by one of his aged friends, who came to visit and converse with him, in this manner: "There is none of us who did not know Alfonso de Valdés, the Emperor's Secretary, as a good man. The satellites of the holy Fathers could never endure his doctrine and authority. They laid such snares for him that if he had returned to Spain there would have been an end of him. They would have caused him to die a cruel death, the Emperor himself could not have saved him" (19). This much appears clear, that he never returned to Spain; had he done so, his name might have furnished another page to the narratives of R. G. de Montes, in his most authentic book on the Spanish Inquisition. The place and period of his death are not recorded; the knowledge of it is much to be desired in order to establish with greater certainty the authorship of a very interesting and well-written anonymous dialogue on the Spanish language upon his brother Juan, to whom it is attributed from various circumstances

mentioned in the work itself, by well-informed Spanish writers (20).

We are frequently obliged to receive many points of history and biography, doubtful in themselves or scarcely consistent with others, upon such evidence as we have before us ; and we accept them as conclusive for the time, until more extended information enables us to modify our former assent. Accepting thus, with no marked reservation, the authority of Spanish writers that Juan de Valdés was the author of the *Dialogo de la Lengua*, and for this conclusion they advance many reasons, it furnishes us with some interesting particulars of the later period of his life, which I shall follow in this place. It is conjectured that he withdrew from Spain shortly after the affair with Castiglione, and about the time when his brother accompanied the Emperor to Bologna and Germany; that is, early in the year 1529, and that he went directly to Naples. It is certain that the author of the *Dialogo de la Lengua*, after remaining some time and making friendly acquaintances in that city, passed on to Rome, where he remained two years, keeping up a correspondence with them by letters, and returning again to Naples: this would bring the date when the *Dialogo* was discoursed to about the year 1533. Here, and in the vicinity, he continued to reside. He was appointed Governor of the Hospital

of the Incurables, San Jacomo, a large building, now or recently the palace of the ministers (21); and according to various writers, none, however, of whom knew him personally, he occupied the position of Secretary to Don Pedro de Toledo, the Viceroy. No direct proof of this fact has yet been found, although it has been recently sought for on the spot with considerable research (22).

At Naples Juan de Valdés delivered up his mind to study and the improvement of his own moral and intellectual nature. His society was sought by such of the nobility as were most distinguished for piety and learning. Several of the most eminent preachers acknowledged their obligations to him for clearer views of Scripture doctrine, long after those obligations had been incurred; among those who were so benefited, may be mentioned Peter Martyr Vermilius, and Bernardino Ochino. Peter Martyr preached at Naples nearly three years 1538-1541. He lectured on the epistles of Paul to the Corinthians in the church of S. Pietro ad Ara, where he drew upon himself particular observation by the manner in which he questioned the generally received doctrine of Purgatory, when expounding the passage 1 Cor. iii. 12-15. In this he may well have followed Valdés, who read and explained about the same time the same epistle in his own house. As early as 1536, Ochino preached his eloquent sermons in the church of San

Giovanni Maggiore ; stirring the mind of the crowds who attended to hear him by his new manner of interpreting Scripture, not by distinctions of scholastic philosophy, but in a spiritual sense and with a most fervent diction. Charles the Fifth was attracted to hear him when he visited Naples on his return from his African expedition, and he has himself told us the impression the sermons made upon his mind, by his remark that the eloquence of Ochino might make the very stones shed tears (23). Valdés frequently attended these sermons. He persuaded Giulia Gonzaga that they would calm the troubles of her anxious spirit ; and he informs us in his dedication to the present volume, that it was on their return together from listening to one of those discourses, that they entered into the conversation recorded in the present volume ; a dialogue in which they were so deeply interested, that only the lateness of the night made it necessary to conclude it. Ochino also is the Preacher so frequently mentioned in the ALFABETO CRISTIANO. The direct reference to him at page 181, on the subject of Christian Charity, will be found clearly expressed in the sixty-fourth sermon of the third part of his *Prediche* ; and numerous examples of the teaching and expressions of Valdés may be found sown as it were throughout the others. In the year 1539 Ochino returned again to preach at Naples in the Cathedral, when his words were noted,

and he was under the necessity of putting a guard upon his language (24).

The religious teaching of Valdés was of a more private and individual character. It was accomplished by personal moral influence of a remarkable kind; by conversations, and letters on special subjects and occasions; by frequent periodical readings and discourses in his own house at Chiaja or Posilippo with his friends and select acquaintances. Among his female hearers were Vittoria Colonna, Isabella Manrique, and others, whilst the house of Giulia Gonzaga afforded a place of meeting for them not open to objection. Giulia Gonzaga maintained an establishment suitable to her rank in the city for her household and the transaction of her affairs, although, to silence scandal, she herself took up her residence in apartments in the Franciscan nunnery of Santa Chiara.

Valdés explains the mental process he pursued in the formation of his own religious views, in the fifty-fourth "Consideration;" again at the close of his Commentary on the Romans, and in the letter placed at the end of the ALFABETO CRISTIANO by Marco Antonio Magno, to whom it was probably addressed. Some slight and interesting allusions in the *Dialogo de la Lengua* give us an insight into the manner of his readings and discourses with his friends. He held frequent intercourse with them at his own re-

sidence in the city ; his less divided leisure was given to them at his country house, situated in a garden, on the shore of the Bay of Naples, near Chiaja. At this country house Valdés received on the Sunday a select number of his most intimate friends, and they passed the day together in this manner. After breakfasting and taking a few turns round the garden, enjoying its beauty and the pleasant prospect of the shores and purple ripples of the bay, where the Isle of Capri on one side drew the eye to the luxurious mansion of Tiberius, and Ischia and Procida rose in sight on the other, they returned into the house, when Valdés read some selected portion of Scripture and commented upon it, or some "divine Consideration" which had occupied his thoughts during the week ; — some subject on which he conceived that his mind had obtained a clearer illumination of the truth. The themes proposed by him might well have been the *Hundred and Ten Considerations*, occupying 110 Sundays, or full two years, if followed up consecutively. After this they discussed the subject together, or they discoursed upon some other points which Valdés himself brought forward, until the hour for dinner. After dinner, in the afternoon, when the servants were dismissed to their own amusements, his friends and not himself proposed the subjects and led the conversation, and he had to discuss them agreeably to their desire. As they had been



pleased to consecrate the morning according to his wishes in the serious reading of the "Book of the Soul," or upon subjects like his "Divine Considerations," he in return devoted his acquirements to their gratification on themes of their selection. Such was the origin of the *Dialogo de la Lengua*, a dialogue on the Spanish language, which occupied seven or more sittings, and was in all probability much more copious than the text which has come down to us, and which furnishes us with these particulars. At nightfall Valdés and his friends returned to the city (25).

The Sunday meetings may have continued four or five years. These sabbaths of studious Christians, this exchange of subjects, this interchange of thought between the proposers, the day, the pure elevation of mind they brought as it were with them, the situation, the beauty of the country, the transparent skies of a southern climate, the low murmurs of the bay, would all be favourable to the purpose of Valdés; and from these social meetings with his friends, his truly religious works appear to have derived their origin and form. In this manner, as in the present dialogue, were produced the materials, rather spoken than written, of those excellent productions, brought afterwards into more exact shape, for the service, first of his own friends, then of theirs, and particularly of Giulia Gonzaga. They were all written by him in Spanish. None were printed during his life-time except the

two politico-religious dialogues written in justification of the Emperor. The translation of Matthew, of the Psalms, and Letters on particular points of doctrine mentioned by himself, *Acharo*, and *Aviso sobre los Interpretes de la sagrada Escritura*, quoted by Llorente, appear to be irrecoverably lost.

The works which we now know, having been since printed, are the following:—

1. Dialogo de Mercurio y Caron : en que allende de muchas cosas graciosas y de buena doctrina : se cuenta lo que ha acaescido en la guerra desdel año de mill y Quinientos y veynte y vno hasta los desafios delos Reyes de Francia y Ynglaterra hechos al Emperador en el año de 1528, 4to. and 8vo., Gothic letter, 3 editions 1529 ?  
 \* — in German, 4to. Amberga, 1609. Frankfurt, 8vo. . . . . 1643
2. Dialogo: en que particularmente se tratan : las cosas acaecidas en Roma: el año de M.D.XXVII. A gloria de Dios y bien vniuersal de la Republica christiana. 4to. G. L. 1529 ? 8vo., 2 editions, s. d. et a. Roman letter, Paris, 8vo. 1586  
 — The Sacke of Roome, Exsequuted by the Emperour Charles' armies euen at the Natiuitie of this Spanish Kinge Philip. . . . . Translated latelie into the English toungue . . . . . London, 4to. B. L. 1590  
 Dos Dialogos escritos por Juan de Valdés, ahora cuidadosamente reimpresos. "Valdesio Hispanus Scriptore superbiat orbis." 8vo. Año de 1850

- Dve dialoghi. L'vno di Mercvrio, et Caronte :  
 Nel quale, oltre molte cose belle, gratiose, et  
 di buona dottrina, si racconta quel, che accadè  
 nella guerra dopò l'anno M.D.XXI., L'altro di  
 Lattantio, et di vno Archideacono : Nel quale  
 puntalmente si trattano le cose auenute in  
 Roma nell' anno M.D.XXVII. Di Spagnuolo  
 in Italiano con molta accuratezza et tradotti, et  
 reuisti. In Venegia. *Con gratia, et privi-*  
*legio* per anni dieci. 8vo. Italic letter, 5  
 editions. 1 ed. in Roman letter . . . 1545
3. Dialogo de las Lenguas [written about 1533] in  
 Gregorio Mayans, "Orignes de la lengua  
 Española," Tom. II. Madrid, 12mo. 1737
- Dialogo de la Lengua (tenido ázia el A. 1533)  
 i publicado por primera vez el año de 1737.  
 Ahora reimpresso conforme al MS. de la  
 Biblioteca Nazonál, único que el Editor co-  
 noze. Por Apendize va una Carta de A.  
 Valdés. 8vo. Madrid. Año de 1860
4. Alfabeto Christiano che insegna la vera via d'ac-  
 quistare il lyme dello spirito santo. Stampata  
 con gratia et priuilegio. Sm. 8vo. (Venegia)  
 l'Anno 1546
- The same text reprinted with a Spanish  
 and English translation. 8vo. London. 1861
- The same in English only. 8vo. London. 1861
5. Modo di tenere nell' insegnare nel predicare al  
 pricipio della religione Christiana. A tract  
 of 13 leaves, mentioned by Vergerio in "Il  
 Catalogo," printed before 1549. *Not dis-*  
*covered* . . . . . 1546?
6. Qual maniera si dourebbe tenere in formare i fi-

- gliuoli de Christiani nella christiana religione.  
1 leaf; Vergerio. Printed before 1549. *Not discovered* . . . . . 1546?
7. Le cento et dieci diuine Considerationi del S.  
Giouāni Valdesso: nelle quali si ragiona delle  
cose piu utili, piu necessarie, et piu perfette,  
della Christiana professione. 1 Cor. ii. 8vo.  
In Basilea. 1550
- The same reprinted; "con Cenni biogra-  
fici sui fratelli Giovanni e Alfonso di  
Valdesso," and ample notes, 8vo. Halle. 1861
- \*\* — In French, 8vo. Lyons. . . . . 1563  
and 12mo. Paris 1565
- In Dutch. Godsaligne Anmerckingen uyt  
het Italiansche overgeset. A copy was  
in the library of Zach. Conrad Uffen-  
bach at Frankfort. See Biblioth. Uffen-  
bach. Francof., 1729. Tom. I. p. 914,  
No. 27. *Not discovered* . . . . . 1565
- In English. The Hundred and Ten Con-  
siderations of Signor John Valdesso.  
4to. Oxford, 1638, and 12mo. Cam-  
bridge. . . . . 1646
- Ziento i diez Consideraciones de Juan de Valdés.  
Ahora publicadas por primera vez en castel-  
lano. "Valdesio Hispanus Scriptore superbiat  
orbis." 8vo. Año de 1855
- Las ciento y diez Consideraciones del Valdés, tra-  
duzidas del Ytaliano en Romance (Spanish),  
4to. [A manuscript in the City Library,  
Hamburgh. This will shortly be edited  
and printed; a facsimile of the title, the  
first Consideration, and the colophon showing

¶ Las ciento e diez consideraciones del valdes,  
Traduzidas del ytaliano en Romance —

¶ Como se a de entender, quel sombre fue criado A.  
Laymagen e semejança de dios consideracion  
primera —

¶ Muchas Vezes he delibrado entender, en que cosa  
propriamente consiste aquello que dize la santa  
escritura, quel hombre fue criado a la ymagen. E  
semejança de dios; E mientras lo e procurado entender  
por la lición, no e hecho ningun provecho: por quella  
lición agora me tiraua a vn parescer e agora a otro,  
hasta que procurandolo por la consideracion, me  
parecia auer lo entendido, pero al menos auer lo començado

a entender, lo que me faltare, tengo por cierto que me  
lo dara el mesmo dios, que me ha dado esto que poseo.  
La ymagen es semejanca de dios, entendido que consiste  
en su proprio ser, en quanto es impassible e ymortal,  
e en quanto es benigno, misericordioso, justo, fiel, e verda-  
dero, con estas calidades, e con estas perficiones entendido,  
que el dios al ombre en el parayso terrestre, donde antes  
que fuese desobediente a dios, era impassible, e ymortal,  
era bueno, misericordioso, justo, fiel, e verdadero. Esta  
ymagen es semejanca de dios entendido, que per dio el primer  
Ombre, por no obedecer a dios, e asi quedo pasible e mortal  
quedo malvado, fué el impio, infiel, e mentiroso. Después  
de aver entendido esto, por la consideracion, queriendo  
conferir lo con la santa escritura, halló que se conforma  
muy ~~lo~~ bien con aquello, que dize. 8. Pablo Eph. iii. e col. ii. e  
asi tanto mas me confirmo en mi consideracion. E pasando  
a mas adelante entendido, que esta ymagen de dios, esta uida  
en la persona de xpo, quanto al animo antes de su muerte:  
donde era benigno, misericordioso, justo, fiel, e verdadero.  
e quanto al anima tal cuerpo, después de su resurreccion,

enquanto a demás della benignidad, e misericordia, justicia,  
verdad, e fidelidad, posee tan bien la inmortalidad, e  
impassibilidad. E Allende desto entiendo, que aquellos que  
siendo llamados e tirados dedios a la gratia del euanpelio,  
hacen suya la justicia de xpo, e son incorporados en xpo,  
en esta presente vida recobran en parte aquella parte de  
la imagen dedios, q apertiene al anymo: e recobran en la vida

2. eterna. tambien la parte, que apertiene al cuerpo: e  
en este modo vernemos to dos por cristo, a ser semejantes  
adios, como cristo, cada vno en su grado: cristo como ca-  
beca, e nosotros como miembros. Es era verdaderamente  
grandissima felicidad, ver en los ombres bondad, miseri-  
cordia, justicia, fidelidad, e verdad: e ver los tambien in-  
parables e immortales, verlos muy semejantes a xpo, e  
verlos muy semejantes adios: e ver que en esta felicidad  
de los honbres cresce la gloria dedios, e cresce la gloria del  
hijo dedios, por cuyo medio reconocemos to dos a uer for-  
seguido nra felicidad, conociendo todos por nra cabeza,  
al mesmo jesu xpo nro senor. —

(Colophon)

Juſtos en cristo, y atienden a comprehender  
la piedad, la justicia, y la Santidad, en la  
qual ſon comprehendiſos ſiendo  
ſemejantes a Dios, y al hiſo  
de Dios, Jeſu cristo  
nueſtro Señor  
Amen.

Fin de las ciento y diez Considera  
ciones que se acabaron de trasladar en  
XXII de noviembre Año de 1709.  
Gloria a Dios y del hijo de  
Dios Jeſu xpò n. ſi.



- the date of the MS., has been taken off for that work, at the sole cost of my friend, L. DE U. i. R., and by his obliging permission it is inserted also in this place.] . . . 1558
8. Comentario, o declaracion breve, y compendiosa sobre la Epistola de S. Paulo Apostol a los Romanos, muy saludable para todo Christiano. Compvesto por Ivan Valdesio pio y sincero Theologo. Rom. 1. En Venecia (Geneva), en casa de Juan Philadelpho. 8vo. . . 1556
9. Comentario o declaracion familiar, y compendiosa sobre la primera Epistola de san Paulo Apostol alos Corinthios, muy vtil para todos los amadores dela piedad Christiana, compvesto por Ivan VV. pio y sincero Theologo. Psal. 119. En Venecia (Geneva), en casa de Juan Philadelpho. 8vo. . . 1557
- La Epistola de San Pablo a los Romanos i la 1. a los Corintios. Ambas traduzidas i comentadas por Juan de Valdés. Ahora fielmente reimpresas. "Valdesio Hispanus Scriptore superbiat orbis." 8vo. Año de 1856

\* A version of the *Dialogo de Mercurio y Caron* from the Spanish into German, made, as it seems, shortly after the publication of the original, is preserved in manuscript in the library of Count Ortenberg at Tambach in Franconia: vedi Serapeum, 1844, p. 122. A copy in German, printed at Amberg, bearing the date of 1613, is in the Grand-ducal Library, Gotha. Both these are mentioned by Dr. Edward Boehmer, in his ample notes to the CX. Considerationi; ed. Halle, 1861, p. 490.

\*\* There are some copies of the French translation of *Le cento et dieci diuine Considerationi*, Lyons, 1563, which bear

the date 1601; they are, however, only a spurious issue of that edition. They have the following title: *Les divines Considerations et saintes meditations de Jean de Val D'esso, Gentil-homme Espagnol. Touchant tout ce qui est necessaire, pour la perfection de la vie Chrestienne. Traduites par C.K.P. Reueuës de nouveau, et rapportees fidelment à l'Exemplaire Espagnol* [which is not true] *et amplifiees de la table des principales matieres traictees par l'Auteur. A Lyon. Par Pierre Picard. 1601.* The title, and the epistle of C. S. Curione in the edition of 1563, 8 leaves, being omitted, are replaced by a new title and preface of 4 leaves only, thus leaving a *hiatus* of 8 pages; and the 3 last leaves of sig. Z are reprinted in order to omit the colophon and date. A copy is found in the Wolfenbuttel Library, and in St. Sepulchre's, Marsh's Library, Dublin.

It may be conjectured that the affair of Carnesecchi not long after the publication, in which he was accused of having "treated" of the books of Valdés at Lyons, in 1564, may have alarmed the publisher, and induced him to withdraw the remaining copies from sale. They were kept in stock and reappeared in this spurious form after the lapse of thirty-eight years, and the death of the parties concerned.

In the ALFABETO CHRISTIANO only have I found any very clear indication that Valdés might have been acquainted with the "Institutes" of Tauler, an example of which I give in the Appendix, pp. 230-5; and the expression at page 62: "Another rule is, because this MINE and THINE are mortal enemies to Christian charity," &c., seems to show that he was not unacquainted also with the "Theologia Germanica," a work of a similar class.

Those persons who have sought information respecting Valdés in the pages of Bayle, Bock, Sandius, and various biographical dictionaries, copying one from the other, may expect something to be said here about the orthodoxy of his religious sentiments. I think that his own opinions are so clearly expressed that they can well defend themselves and commend their author to the sound judgment of the reader. Yet if it be desired further to ascertain the ground on which those writers assumed a claim on him as one in accord with themselves respecting the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ, of his belief in which his writings bear such ample proof, it may be seen by reference to the hundred and ninth of his *Considerations*: “On the Conception which I have at present of Christ;” and more briefly at page 106 of this volume, where it is of similar import, and these passages show how groundless was the assumption. Nor are some writers, on the other hand, strictly correct in describing him as a Lutheran, and claiming him for a Protestant. Valdés entered less than almost any thoughtful man of his time into the battle of hierarchies. He was less a destroyer of error and evil, than a builder up of truth and goodness. He left not, himself, the profession of the Church of Rome, nor incited others so to do. This was no part of his religion. He looked beyond her ceremonies and pompous ritual. Taking the New Testament for

his standard, he fixed his view upon the things signified, not upon the symbols exhibited; being aware, to use his own words, how "outward ceremonies breed inward vices," and that the mind inclined to superstition is naturally inclined to persecution. He was more Erasmian than Lutheran. He had the advantage of not having been brought up a priest, and was therefore not called upon to perform ceremonies in which he had no reliance. Had he been a priest, his conscience, like Martyr's and Ochino's, could not have allowed him to practise the rites in the sense in which the people received them; and his principles brought to this test must have driven him to a more definite decision respecting them. So I infer, at least, from his writings. The works most clearly ascertained to be from his pen, those written during the later years of his life, namely, the "Alfabeto Christiano;" the Commentaries on the Epistle to the Romans, and on the first of Corinthians; and the "Hundred and Ten Considerations," a series of separate productions, have all four an uniformity of character, of consistency, and of religious purity, and all of them are conceived in the same tone of humility, modesty, and in a truly evangelical spirit. The style in all of them manifests a mind serene, quiet, and self-possessed; which, while it is active and highly inquisitive, is ever subjective to the authority of the Scriptures. The understanding and reason are found always

guided by the *royal law* of which the Apostle James speaks; they are vigilant over the passions and affections. There is nothing in them showing inconsideration, hesitation, or impatience; nothing assumptive or dogmatic.

With a mastership exercised over his appetites, Valdés sought to apprehend religious truth through the just medium of feeling as well as reason. He brought an earnest affection for right wisdom to the bar of reason and a well-regulated understanding, and tried it by the test of his experiences and the declarations of the New Testament. When he found Scripture, experience, the heart and the understanding all concurring to elucidate the truth he sought to find, he delivered his mind to absolute trust in it, and at once gave it life by applying it to the conduct of life. This ought to remove the *objection* of mysticism from his writings; and the same reason should remove it, as a charge, from a body of Christians at the present day, who in consequence of carrying out their reasonable religious convictions into daily practice, have not inaptly been styled the most *English of the English*; that is, the most practical, in these respects, of a nation eminently practical. And after all, when more intimately considered, how can the religious relations, although clearly known to himself, between the spirit of a man and the Divine Spirit, in which relations the *essential* quality of real religion

consists, be otherwise than mystical to others who yet wear their own mystery if they also have any essential religious sentiments? Neither did Valdés inculcate an ascetic life. He mixed with men and with their affairs, striving to direct them to a foretaste of that true felicity in this life which they might hope to enjoy perpetually hereafter; and in this also he was practical. The Dialogue of the ALFABETO CRISTIANO endeavours to inculcate in the mind of Giulia Gonzaga such purity of intention and thought, such sacrifice of mere distinction of rank and honour, such quiet suffering of injury, such a manner of beholding Christ in God and again God in Christ, as clearly to show that the religion of Valdés, that which in every man should be truly his own, his religion of the heart, was indeed the religion of the New Testament. It was so in its spiritual meaning, in a sense more profound than the Apostles appear to have had during their Lord's ministry and presence whilst here upon earth, before his resurrection and ascension. And this brought Juan de Valdés to receive the doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, in an acceptation deeper and more intimate, although less demonstrative than that which Luther himself enunciated to reform Europe. This he taught to others in the manner of his Divine Master, in the dwelling-house, or walking by the way, or when, for those who had an ear to hear, he gave them to understand

things of highest meaning by personal communications explained by parables drawn from incidents familiar to their circumstances and from objects within the range of their immediate observation. Vesuvius illustrated the *earthquakes* of mental agitation; the passage from the Mole to Capri, the effect of the steadiness of faith; the common journey from Naples to Spain, the travel of life; the disease of the skin so well known in earlier ages, that the cure of interior evils cannot be effected by outward services; the proverbs of the people, our conquest of ourselves; and that a successful lawsuit may be more damaging than its failure.

In person he was spare in body, of fair and pleasing countenance, of sweet and courteous manners, of pleasant and winning speech (26), he was unmarried and of unblemished life. He died at Naples, about middle age, in the year 1540, greatly beloved and honoured by his numerous friends, whose sentiments are represented in the well-known letter of Jacomo Bonfadio to Carnesecchi, written shortly after the event.

*Jacomo Bonfadio to Monsignor Carnesecchi.*

I have heard by letter from M. Marc'antonio Flaminio that your Lordship has had a very severe fever, which has brought you near to death, and that now you are not out of bed, although you are out of danger. I have felt, as I ought, the greatest uneasiness; and, reflecting in myself

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how temperate you are in all things, and with what regularity you order your way of living, I can discover no other cause for your sickness than too fine a temperament, which shows its spirit to be divine. As the Romans preserved those statues which fell from the skies, may God preserve your Lordship's life; and He will do it, so that one of the brightest lights of Tuscan virtue may not be early extinguished upon earth. Let your Lordship, then, under the direction of God, endeavour to improve your health, and to live with that cheerfulness with which you were accustomed when we were at Naples. Would we were there now with that happy company! I seem now to see you affectionately sigh for that country, and frequently call to your mind Chiaja and the charming Posilippo. Monsignor, let us confess the truth; Florence is all beautiful, within and without,—this cannot be denied; yet the amenity of Naples, that situation, those shores, the perpetual spring there, show a higher degree of excellence. There Nature appears to rule with dominion, and, everywhere presiding, smiles and rejoices. If you were now at the windows of that turret, so often praised by us, while the eyes were cast by turns all around those sunny gardens and then stretched along the spacious bosom of that smiling sea, a thousand vital spirits would multiply about the heart. I remember that your Lordship said many times before leaving, that you wished to return, and as often invited me there. May it please God that we may return! Yet, thinking on the other side, where shall we go now Signor Valdés is dead? This has truly been a great loss to us and to the world, for Signor Valdés was one of the rare men of Europe, and those writings he has left on the Epistles of Paul and the Psalms of David most amply show it. He was without doubt in his actions, his speech, and in all his conduct a



perfect man. With a particle of his soul he governed his frail and spare body; with the larger part, and with his pure understanding, as though almost out of the body, he was always raised in the contemplation of truth and of divine things. I sympathise with Messer Marc'antonio [Magno?], for he loved and admired him above all others. It seems to me, Signor, that when so many talents and so much learning and virtue are united in one mind, that they make war upon the body and seek to ascend as soon as they can, together with the spirit, to that mansion from which it descended . . . (27).

From the Lago di Garda. [1541?]

### GIULIA GONZAGA.

The most authentic account of Giulia Gonzaga that I have been able to meet with is that drawn up with much care by Ireneo Affo, Vice-Librarian to the Duke of Parma; published first in the *Raccolta Ferrarese* in 1781, and afterwards enlarged and published in a thin quarto to grace the nuptials of Count Sanvitale of Parma with a descendant of the Gonzaga family (28).

GIULIA GONZAGA, or, as she signed her name after her marriage, GIULIA DE GONZAGA COLONNA, was the eldest daughter of Ludovico, or Luigi Gonzaga, Duke of Sabbionetta, a branch of the family of the Dukes of Mantua, who married, in 1497, Francesca di Gianliugi Fieschi, of Genoa. Giulia was born at Gazzuolo about the year 1499 (29). As she grew in years, and while yet young, she was admired by all

who beheld her, for the beauty of her person, the brightness of her intellect, and the virtues of her heart, kindness, courtesy, and discretion, joined with an engaging candour which won all hearts in her favour. The poets of the time celebrated her in their verses, Ariosto, Molza, Bernardo Tasso, and Porrino. She was herself known as a poetess in an age of good writing. The Sonnets of Donna Giulia are scattered in various early collections, and were gathered into a volume and published at Bergamo in 1750. At the early age of thirteen she married Vespasiano Colonna, Duke of Trajetto and Count of Fondi in the kingdom of Naples; a widower of the mature age of forty, with a daughter named Isabella. Having a constitution rendered infirm by his military service, their happy union lasted but a few years. He manifested his estimate of Giulia's qualifications, by committing to her by his will, at so early an age, the administration of his estates, and the guardianship of his daughter Isabella, the sole offspring of his former marriage. Graced with talents, wealth, station, youth, and beauty; retired in her castle of Fondi, Giulia received the most pressing solicitations to marry a second time; nor were there wanting many reasons for such a step, if but for the protection of her fortune and honour in an age of misrule and violence. She however rejected all entreaties, adopting for her emblem, according to the practice at that time of

the ladies of Italy, the flower of the amaranth, with the motto : *NON MORITURA*, "it will not die," expressive of her unchangeable attachment to her deceased husband (30).

Her daughter-in-law, Isabella, married in 1528, for her first husband, Giulia's brother, Luigi Gonzaga, lord of Gazzuolo, surnamed Rodomonte on account of his romantic bravery. The Pope, Clement the Seventh (Giulio de' Medici), opposed their union, wishing the connection for his nephew Ippolito ; but Isabella's steady attachment to Luigi triumphed over all obstacles, while Ippolito de' Medici vainly made the most pressing solicitations for Giulia herself. He translated and sent to her the second book of the *Eneid*, prefixing a dedication to her, expressive of the warmest attachment, in the style of the time (31). After her husband's demise, two candidates arose to assert their claims to the estates ; Ascanio Colonna on one side, and Napoleone Orsini, Abbot of Torfa, in the kingdom of Naples, on the other. The Pope, Clement the Seventh, substantiated her rights by her husband's will, and Charles the Fifth, as sovereign, commissioned her brother Luigi in 1532 to put her again into possession. Whilst endeavouring to recover the castle of Nicovara, he was wounded in the assault in the shoulder by a shot from an arquebus ; the castle, however, yielded, but Luigi died from the effects of the wound in the presence of Isabella, at the age of thirty-

three years, recommending his young widow to Giulia's care, and leaving an infant son named Vespasiano, then scarcely twelve months old. As soon as the boy had passed the years of infancy, Isabella having married for her second husband Carlo de Lanoja, Prince of Sulmona, he was consigned by virtue of his father's will to the guardianship of his paternal grandfather, and at his death in 1540 came under the care of his aunt Giulia to bring up and educate, being then about eight years of age. In 1533 Giulia returned to Fondi, where she once more took up her abode.

Her residence at Fondi and the society she attracted to it, are mentioned in the poems and letters of some of the best writers of the time. They made her praises known, and her celebrity was not confined to Italy. This distinction of her name, together with the maritime situation of Fondi, exposed her to a stroke of unexpected danger, from which she very narrowly escaped. In the twilight of a September evening of the following year the galleys of Hyradin Barbarossa, the corsair, who afterwards became Dey of Tunis, were discovered off the Bay of Naples, steering to the northward. In the dead of night he came abreast of Fondi, and immediately disembarked his men. Little resistance to so unexpected an attack could be made by the townspeople, and the inmates of the castle had retired to rest for the night. The uproar and clamour in the town gave the first alarm at

the castle. Giulia, roused by her domestics, while the corsairs were already making the assault, *balzò dal letto*, fled by a passage to the drawbridge that led to a gallery in the rock, and climbing through an opening, found herself upon the hillside. A horse being then procured, she mounted, and gave free rein to Vallerossa, where she rested. Barbarossa having missed the chief object, for which he might have expected at least a weighty ransom, and finding the country alarmed and the forces assembling, plundered the town and re-embarked with the booty. Among the nobility who hastened to the defence of the place was one who had a more personal motive than the rest. Ippolito de' Medici, rather a warrior than a priest, although he had now given up secular pursuits and become a cardinal, hearing of Giulia's danger, hastily assembled a body of horse in Rome and led them himself to her rescue. The crisis, however, had passed away; and whilst he was entertained for a short time with gratitude at the castle, he solicited Giulia's permission to allow her portrait to be painted for himself, — a favour she was not then in a position to refuse, if indeed there were any sufficient reason for so doing. Upon his return to Rome he sent Sebastiano del Piombo, the best portrait-painter of the time, to Fondi. He went, attended by a retinue of four horsemen, for the purpose. He was entertained there a month, and returned to Rome with the por-

trait: a divine picture, says Vasari, with which the Cardinal was highly pleased (32). In August of the following year he passed from Itri again to Fondi. Giulia was absent. Remaining at Fondi during the day, he returned to Itri; but having taken cold, he fell sick of a fever, and there died.

At this period, 1535, Giulia had left Fondi and taken up her abode in Naples, where she occupied a house in the Borgo delle Vergini, keeping up an establishment and servants suitable to her rank. There she transacted business and received visits, but to avoid scandal to her character in so large and promiscuous a city, she herself took up her residence at the Franciscan convent of Santa Chiara. The Pope granted a brief to allow her to reside there as a secular person, that is, as one not bound by the rules of the cloister (33). This arrangement continued uninterrupted for a period of thirty years, during the remainder of her life. Isabella had married Carlo de Lanoja, Prince of Sulmona, as before mentioned. In the double connection of daughter-in-law and sister-in-law, she now stirred up a long and painful contention against Giulia, asserting that the testament of her father, Vespasiano Colonna, by virtue of which Giulia received the income of the estate during her widowhood, was null and void; and she refused besides to give up certain jewels and other precious heirlooms which

had been lent to her. Lawyers were consulted, and finding the case ambiguous, Giulia was inclined to a fair compromise, as she declared in a letter to her brother, Don Ferrante Gonzaga. The Emperor Charles the Fifth coming to Naples in 1535 on his return from Africa, the case was laid before him. He referred it to the decision of Don Pedro de Toledo, the Viceroy, recommending by letter dated the 12th of October, 1535, that the cause should be amicably disposed of by mutual agreement (34). After various discussions before the Viceroy on the subject, it was adjudged that Giulia should be satisfied with her dowry and the addition left to her by her husband. This did not put an end to Isabella's importunity, who continued the contention, wishing for herself the addition of pinmoney (*sopradotte*), amounting in the aggregate to 13,000 ducats. She required that a judicial disposition she herself had made should be rendered void, although the validity of the deeds by which it was settled remained unshaken. Isabella then offered to give Giulia 500 ducats annually for the support and maintenance of her household, but once more changed her mind. Hence Charles the Fifth deputed by diploma of the 27th of February, 1536, three members of his council as commissioners, to give judgment as justice required. A great part of the year 1536 was spent in this unpleasant affair. On the 8th of June, 1537, Giulia

wrote to her brother respecting the issue of the suit: "The judges have decreed the Signora Isabella to pay me 2500 ducats annually in quarterly payments, (*terza per terza*), and 1000 ducats down for lapsed time." Thus ended this troublesome affair, to which allusion appears to be made in her conversation with Valdés. "Many years have I lived in the manner I describe, and during this time, as *you know*, various circumstances have happened to me sufficient to disturb a tranquil spirit, more especially a soul so disquieted as mine."

It was precisely under these perplexing circumstances that her intimate acquaintance with Juan de Valdés took place and that the conversation of the ALFABETO CHRISTIANO was discoursed. These incidents serve to explain some parts of the dialogue: the return in the evening from hearing the preacher's sermon; the prolonged conversation carried on in her house to a late hour; how Valdés could have assisted her in her outward affairs by his intercourse with the Viceroy and the Emperor; and the reason why Valdés endeavours so much to impress upon her mind an entire dependence upon God and faith in his promises for outward support; the duty of forgiveness of injuries; the sacrifice of mere worldly honour; and they also explain a certain clause in her will, by which she directs that 350 ducats be paid down "to the Signora Donna Isabella, Principessa



di Sulmona instead of a certain chalice and patena and certain pearls, and a silver basin that descended to my possession, from her mansion, and which may be valued at this sum" (35).

By the will of Ludovico, his paternal grandfather, in June, 1540, the tutelage of Isabella's son, Vespasiano, then proceeding Duke of Sabbionetta, devolved upon the care of his aunt Giulia. She immediately despatched Marco Antonio Magno as ambassador to the court of Charles the Fifth, at that time at Brussels, to secure the investiture of the State of Lombardy for her nephew, and to solicit that the former administrators of the State might be superseded by the Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga and Don Ferrante, Viceroy of Sicily, his brother (36). In September, 1541, the Emperor issued a favourable diploma, and immediately Giulia proceeded with Vespasiano's education, providing for him the best instructors in Tuscan, Greek, and Latin. As he grew up he evidenced the fruits of her care and judgment by his general character and especially by his love of letters. He granted to the Jews a license to establish a Hebrew press at Sabbionetta, from which issued several editions of the Pentateuch, Psalter, and rabbinical commentaries (37). He died in 1591, and in him the Dukes of Sabbionetta became extinct.

Valdés had been removed by death from the persecutions to come, which seem to have been fore-

shadowed in his own mind, towards the close of the year 1540. Carnesecchi, who possessed an abbacy at Naples, was there in the December of that year, and was probably with him in his last hours; he took the place of Valdés in Giulia's confidence. It appears that she was the "Italian Princess" to whom he was afterwards accused of having recommended two teachers who were sent to open schools in her territory for the instruction of children; but whose opinions becoming suspected, they were apprehended by the Inquisition (38). When he was called to Rome about February, 1546, to defend himself against suspicions of holding erroneous sentiments, Giulia Gonzaga was questioned about her correspondence with him. He rebutted all the imputations of his accusers, and returned to his abbey at Naples, where he then resided, enjoying the fairest reputation with the highest personages as a man of great learning and unspotted integrity. A second time, in 1565, during his last trial under Pius the Fifth, Giulia's name being found in a portion of his correspondence with Calvin, her latter days were disturbed by the vexations of the Holy Office, and it is said that they shortened her days. This may or may not have been the case, for she had already attained to a mature period of life. And a quiet and perhaps welcome death in a home where she had passed nearly one half of her life, arrived to prevent any further molestation, and also to remove

her from the painful knowledge of the cruel death which shortly afterwards overtook Carnesecchi. Having made her will a second time, a translation of which is given in the Appendix, she left, with the exception of a number of small legacies, her nephew Vespasiano her heir. In the full possession of her mental faculties to the last moment of her life, she expired on the 19th of April, 1566, aged sixty-seven, and was interred in the church of Santa Chiara, according to her last desire.

Few were the years of the life of Valdés after the conversation of the ALFABETO CRISTIANO, yet during four, or at the most five of them, he presented to Giulia his translation from the Greek of the Gospel according to Matthew, of the Psalms translated from the Hebrew, of the Epistle to the Romans, also from the Greek, with a commentary; nor could she be unacquainted with his "Considerations" and his other writings, while they were in manuscript. All those that we know of with certainty had also been printed some years, and circulated to some extent in Italy during her lifetime; and, as I have said before, it is to her agent or *procuratore*, Marco Antonio Magno, that we owe at least the translation of the present work from the Spanish manuscript, and consequently its existence at the present time.

And what was the effect upon her mind of the

religious instruction of Valdés? This at least we know; that besides the superintendence of her nephew's education, she passed her years in visiting the sick in the hospitals, relieving them with her own hands; in select society, avoiding the acquaintance of mere worldly persons; and in the constant perusal of Holy Scripture, that volume of heavenly refreshment, "the aliment of the perfect," which Valdés had requested her to substitute for his own writings. She left behind her a character eminent for the graces of her mind; for unspotted purity of life, in a city and in an age of unrestrained license of morals; and for exalted piety carried out to the consistent practice of virtue;—a character, we may willingly believe, such as Valdés had marked out for her attainment. Its memory therefore for these qualities, more than for the distinction of rank and family, though receiving a lustre from them also, has come down to us in this later age, joined with his who is now known, with greater certainty than was apprehended before, to have been "at once her guide, and counsellor, and friend."

BENJAMIN B. WIFFEN.

NEAR WOBURN,  
7th mo. 1861.

## NOTES.

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### NOTE 1. Page vii.

Perez : *Epistola Consolatoria*, 1560—1848; and *Breve Tratado de Doctrina*, 1560—1852. Valera : *Tratado para confirmar los pobres cativos de Berberia*, 1594—1854, and *Aviso*, 1600—1854. Enzinas : *Dos Informaciones*, etc., 1559—1857. Secondly, Montes : *Artes de la Inquisición*, 1567—1851. Sacharles : *Español Reformado*, 1621—1854. Valdés : *Ziento i diez Consideraciones*, 1550 — 1855. To these may be added a translation into Dutch, made about 1620, of Valera's *Dos Tratados*, remaining in MS., and a translation made by one of the early Spanish reformers, 1558, of the CX. *Consideraciones*, now in manuscript and shortly to be printed.

### NOTE 2. Page xi.

Vergerio : *Il Catalogo de libri, li quali nvovamente nel mese di Maggio nell' anno presente MDXLVIII. sono stati condannati, et scomunicati per heretici, Da M. Giouan della casa legato di Venetia et d'alcuni frati. È aggivnto sopra il medesimo catalogo vn iudicio, e discorso del Vergerio*, 4to. There is a copy in the library of the British Museum, 619 d. 8; there is another in the Royal Library, Dresden, and a third in the library at Zurich. Vergerio says : " In

this Catalogue, among many others, is the name of Girolamo Savonese, which is a feigned name. Messer Giulio da Milano being then a prisoner in San Gio. Bragela at Venice, wrote that little book and some very earnest letters; you see whether he feared the cruelty of the Pharisees who had him in their hands. And disguised is that other: *di Gratia Dio di Monte Santo*; these epistles are by the same author who has written those others: *della fede, dell' opere, della carità*, and another of more importance. It is an easy thing to vary a name a little, and it may do much good, giving the faithful to rejoice in the glory of God, and enabling the tracts to circulate safe from the cruel snares of our enemies." Sig. Cv.

In the Bodleian Library are: *Exhortatione al Martirio di Giulio da Milano riueduta et ampliata*, s. l. 1552, and *The XLIII. Sermon of M. Giulio of Milane touchyng the Lordes Supper. Dedicated to the worshypfull mystres Anne Carowe*. 31 leaves, 4to. B. L.

NOTE 3. Page xiii.

*Il Catalogo*, etc., Aiiiij<sup>2</sup>. Haym gives an edition with this title: *Modo che si dee tenere nell' insegnare, et predicare il principio della Religione Christiana*. Roma, 1545, in 12mo. Biblioteca Italiana, 3rd Ed., 1803, vol. iv. p. 224.

NOTE 4. Page xv.

M'Crie, History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Italy in the XVIth Century, 2nd Edition, 1833, p. 355, from Apostolo Zeno. Note al Fontanini, Bibl. della Eloq. Italiana, tom. 1, p. 119.

NOTE 5. Page xviii.

*Report of the Trial and Martyrdom of Pietro Carnesecchi, etc. Translated from the original MS., and edited with an English translation, facsimiles of signatures, an introduction, and illustrative notes, by Richard Gibbings, B.D., of Trinity College, Dublin, &c., Dublin and London, 1856.* This record of the official sentence of the Inquisition against Carnesecchi has supplied me with the preceding circumstances respecting him. Rarely do we find a small volume of xxxiii. and 53 pp. enriched with so much correct research, varied learning, and valuable illustration, as this.

Also, *Lezioni di Antichità Toscane e specialmente della città di Firenze recitate nell' accademia della Crusca da Giovanni Lami Publico professore. In Firenze, 1766, 4to. vol. ii. p. 600 et seq.* Lami must have had his particulars about Carnesecchi from the Records of the Inquisition of Rome.

NOTE 6. Page xviii.

The *Comentario . . . sobre la Epistola de San Pablo, Apostol a los Romanos*, 1556 ; and *Comentario . . . sobre la primera Epistola de San Pablo, Apostol a los Corintios*, 1557, edited by Juan Perez. Although they bear the imprint of Venice, like his versions of the New Testament and Psalms, all of them were evidently printed by Crespín at Geneva.

NOTE 7. Page xx.

Martir Rizo : *Historia de la Ciudad de Cuenca*. Madrid, 1629, fol. p. 284. "La casa de Valdés es de la mas antiguas y principales del Reyno de Leon ;" and after having

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named some distinguished members of the family, amongst whom was the Grand Inquisitor, Fernando de Valdés, Archbishop of Seville, he continues: "Un Cavallero deste apellido y familia llamado Hernando de Valdés vino a poblar a la ciudad de Cuenca mas ha de trezientos y cinquenta años, donde dexó casas suntuosas, Capilla y mayoraazgo: tuvo muchos hijos, y dellos muy noble descendencia, que por su notoria nobleza ascendió uno a ser Camarero del Pontifice, y otro" [no doubt Alfonso de Valdés] "fue Secretario del Emperador: y los demas descendientes desta Casa han sido Regidores y Procuradores de Cortes por la ciudad, y estado de la nobleza de Cuenca, con otras grandes dignidades, que ocuparon otros en Iglesias destos Reynos, y en servicio de sus Reyes."

Pedro Martyr Angleria, Epist. D.CLXXXIX. p. 380, writing to the Marques de los Velez y Mondejar in 1520, mentions, "*Alfonso Valdesio, magnæ spei juvine cujus patrem Fernandum de Valdés rectorem Conchensem nostris*"

. . . . .

NOTE 8. Page xxi.

Diálogo de la Lengua, ed. 1860, p. 153.

NOTE 9. Page xxii.

Jo. Genesius Sepulveda, Opera. Madrid, vol. iii. Epist. xiv. pp. 107-8.

NOTE 10. Page xxii.

Abate Pierantonio Serassi in Lettere del Conte B. Castiglione. Padova, 1769-71, 4to. vol. ii. p. 169. Serassi might have corrected himself, having the copy of Valdés' letter before him, signed: "muy certo Serv., Alonso de Valdés." Llorente speaks doubtfully, Historia de la Inqui-



sición de España, ed. Barcellona, 1835, cap. xxv. Art. I. p. 311.

NOTE 11. Page xxiii.

Llorente, ed. Barcellona, 1835, cap. xxi. pp. 82-3.

NOTE 12. Page xxv.

Erasmus, Opera, Lugd. Bat. Epist. M.XXX. 1165-6, and Epist. D.CCCC.XXXVII.

NOTE 13. Page xxvii.

The Hundred and Ten Considerations of Signor John Valdeso. Consideration LI. Oxford, 1638, 4to. In the edition of Cambridge, 1646, 12mo., the editor has changed the author's words, *Papa, nella casa di Papa*, to "the Prince, the Prince's household." Nicholas Ferrar, the translator, gave them correctly in his edition, Oxford, 1638.

NOTE 14. Page xxvii.

It appears likely that it was on account of the *Dialogo en que particularmente se tratan las cosas acaecidas en Roma, el año de M.D.XXVII.*, that his name was inserted in the prohibitory Index of Venice, 1554. *Alphonsus de Valdés. Hispanus*, sig. A 2. See a reprint of this Index by Joseph Mendham in An Index of prohibited Books by command of the present Pope Gregory XVI., in 1835. London, 1840. I have not seen it elsewhere.

NOTE 15. Page xxviii.

Alfonso de Valdés dates his letters to Pedro Martyr Angleria from Brussels prid cal. Sept. (30th Sept.) 1520,

and from Worms 3 id. Mai (13th May), 1521. Martyris  
Epist. 689.722.

NOTE 16. Page xxviii.

*Relacion de las nuevas de Italia sacadas de las cartas que los capitanes y comisario del Emperador y Rey nuestro señor han escripto á su Majestad: assi de la victoria contra el Rey de Francia como de otras cosas alla acaecidas: vista y corregida por el señor gran Chanciller é consejo de su Majestad.* It finishes thus: *Los señores del consejo de su Majestad, mandaron á mi, Alonso de Valdés, secretario del illustre señor gran Chanciller, que ficiese imprimir la presente relacion.*

ALFONSO DE VALDÉS.

A tract of 8 leaves, 4to., without date or place of printing. Note 1, p. 18, in an article by the Marques P. J. Pidal, *de Juan de Valdés y de si es el autor del Diálogo de las Lenguas*, in *Revista Hispano-Americana*. Entrega 1, 1848.

*Invictissimi Romanorum Imperatoris Caroli huius nominis quinti, ac Hispaniarum Regis catholici ad Dvo Clementis septimi Pontificis Romani brevia responsio, in qua ab ipso Pontifice appellat: petitque generalis christianorum omniv Concilii congregationem cum nonnullis aliis litteris, atque actis publicis. Quorum catalogorum in proxima pagina invenies. Cum privilegio imperiali.* Colophon: *Impressum est Compluti, per Michaellem De Eguia. Anno M.D.XXVII. die decimo Mensis Aprilis.* 36 leaves in folio.

In the British Museum and Bodleian Libraries are various editions with titles slightly varied from the above, which was the first and official edition for Spain. Compluti, 1527. Basil, s. a. Antwerp, 1527, 8vo. Dresden, in German,

1529, 4to. In French in MS. (British Museum). Monguntia, 1527, 4to., with an imperial license signed *Alphonsus Valdesius*, probably the official edition for Germany. The Pope's Nuncio endeavoured, but in vain, to prevent their publication. Il sig. Cancelliero . . . ha fatto stampare l'Apologia del Re di Francia e la sua Risposta con mille altre delle cose passate e trattate; medesimamente si stampano i Capitoli della Lega, e credo ancora la risposta del Breve, dove S. Santità allegava le cause della guerra; medesimamente certe lettere del Christianissimo agli Elettori del Imperio e la risposta, e alcun' altre tai cose, alle quali io averei voluto rimidiare, e far che non si pubblicassero, ma non ho potuto. Di Valledolit alli xviii. di Marzo M.D.XXVII.—Serassi, Lettere del B. Castiglione. Padova, 1769–71, vol. ii. p. 144.

NOTE 17. Page xxx.

For the earliest notice of this letter I am indebted to M. Young, author of the *Life and Times of Paleario*, 1860, 2 vols. 8vo.,—a work of great research made during a residence of some years in Italy, containing new and varied information respecting the chief Italian reformers of the sixteenth century, especially of the reputed author of the *Beneficio di Giesu Christo*. Before the publication, a copy of the letter was kindly sent to me. It will be found printed in the Appendix of that work. The letter of Alfonso de Valdés and the reply to it will be found in *Lettere del Conte B. Castiglione, dall' Abate Pierantonio Serassi*. Padova, 1769–71, 4to. vol. ii. pp. 169–202,—taken from a copy by an Italian hand. Both the Letter and Reply are more correctly printed as an Appendix to (Valdés') *Diálogo de la Lengua* in the edition of Madrid, 1860, pp. 1–71.

## NOTE 18. Page xxxii.

Vita Des. Erasmi edit. Paulus G. F. N. Merula Lugd. Bat. 1607, 4to.

## NOTE 19. Page xxxiii.

Novimus Alphonsum Valdesium, Secretarium Imperatoris, hominem præstantem, cui propter doctrinam et auctoritatem, qua excellabat, ejusmodi insidias paraverant satellites sanctorum patrum monachi, ut si in Hispaniam reversus fuisset, non simplici mortis genere vitam illi ademissent sancti religiosi, quorum e manibus semel comprehensum ne Imperator quidem ipse extorquere potuisset. (Fol. 188.) Historiam incarcerationis sive captivitatis et liberationis Francisci de Enzinas, a MS. preserved in the library of the Royal Christian Gymnasium at Altona, a copy of which has been furnished me by the care of Profess. Johan. Lucht. See also the French translation, *Histoire de l'estat dv Pais bas, et de la religion d'Espagne*. Par François du Chesne [Enzinas], 1558, 8vo. p. 151.

## NOTE 20. Page xxxiv.

*Diálogo de la Lengua (tenido ázia el A. 1533) i publicado por primera vez el año de 1737. Ahora reimpresso conforme al MS. de la Biblioteca Nazional, único que el Editor conoze. Por Apendize va una Carta de A. Valdés. Madrid, año de 1860, 8vo.* The editor strongly advocates the authorship by Juan de Valdés, and gives at some length the reasons for his belief. See also the Marques P. J. Pidal in *Revista Hispano-Americana*, entrega 1, 1848, pp. 18-30. Ticknor, *Historia de la Literatura Hispanola*. Tomo ii. p. 105 note. The account in the additions to the same vol., p. 512, by the Spanish editor, is confused; D.

Casiano Pellicer attributes it to Alfonso de Valdés. There are passages in the *Diálogo de la Lengua* addressed to Valdés, the principal speaker, which appear to refer by turns to each of the brothers. "I know not whether you would venture to say so in the Chancery of Valladolid" (p. 78), would seem to allude to the secretaryship of Alfonso under Gatinara the Grand Chancellor. Again, in a passage suppressed by Mayans at p. 137: "Since you defend the friars, I wish to-day more to defend the King of France against the Emperor;" being a tart allusion to the *Diálogo de Mercurio y Caron*, written by Valdés. "I never in my life saw a man more attached to writing; at home he is always in fact a St. Juan the Evangelist, pen in hand, so that I believe he writes at night what he does-by day, and in the day what he dreams by night." (P. 16.) This appears to allude to the name, Juan, and his scripture studies. Again: "You did not learn this Spanish bravery in St. Paul. Valdés. — It is enough that I learnt it of St. Peter, and in Rome" (p. 149); a double allusion probably to his Commentaries on Paul's Epistles, and to his certain residence in Rome in 1531. The proverbs: "Quien á sí venze, á nadie teme" (p. 125), and "de andar por los ramas" (p. 203), are used also in the *ALFABETO CHRISTIANO*, pp. 38, 44. Any doubt respecting the authorship might probably be solved by the discovery of what became of Alfonso after the Diet of Ratisbon in 1532.

NOTE 21. Page xxxv.

Vita di Giulia Gonzaga. Manuscript.

NOTE 22. Page xxxv.

Simler in *Epitome Conradi Gesneri Tiguri*, 1555, fol. 111<sup>b</sup>. Joannes Valdesius secretarius regis [pro-regis?]

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*Neapolitani*, scripsit dialogus Charuntem et Mercurium impressos Italice, item considerationes pias et doctas itidem excusas, item in Psalmos aliquot in evangelium Matthei et Joannis, et quædam aliæ. Simler may have received information from Peter Martyr Vermilius, or from Ochino; but Curione, who mentions Juan de Valdés in *Pasquillus extaticus* as early as 1545, that is, five years before he edited the CX. Considerationi, and who could have had his information about Valdés equally from Peter Martyr and Ochino, both there and in his preface to the latter work, is silent on the subject of Valdés having been Secretary to the Viceroy of Naples. Simler, and most of the writers who have followed him, may have confounded the secretaryship of Alfonso to the emperor with Juan's certain residence and death at Naples.

NOTE 23. Page xxxvi.

Antonio Castaldo in *Raccolta dell' Istoria del Regno di Napoli*, vol. vi. p. 66.

NOTE 24. Page xxxvii.

Peter Martyr's sentiments on Purgatory may be compared with those of Valdés in his *Comentario sobre la Primera Epistola a los Corintios*. Edition 1856, pp. 58–61.

Ochino knew Valdés at Naples early in the year 1536, again in 1539; Valdés died in that city about the close of the year 1540. Ochino printed one volume of his *Prediche* (sermons) at Venice in 1541, before his departure from Italy. An enlarged edition was printed at Geneva in 1543–4 in five small volumes or parts, the first part in italic, the others in Roman letter; a copy of this edition is

in the library of the British Museum, 1359, a. 1-5. Haym gives an edition, in five parts or volumes, s. l. et a. (printed at Basle, 1543), which seems to be the edition I have used. Some copies of this edition were issued with the name of *Thomaso da Siena* in the title.

The influence of the teaching of Valdés upon the mind of Ochino may be discovered throughout, and there is scarcely a point of doctrine advanced in the ALFABETO CRISTIANO that is not to be found, frequently repeated in the expressions used by Valdés and dilated upon in the *Prediche*. Crossing a ford, used at pp. 49 and 80 of the *Alfabeto*, may be read in the *Quarta parte, predica vii*. Peace of conscience at p. 30 in pred. xxviii. To know one's self, to read in our own book, at p. 200, in pred. xii. Fear of hell and love of paradise, at pp. 185-6 in pred. xxiv. Purposes of the coming of Christ in the world, at pp. 106-7 in the *Seconda parte, predica xii*. The general Pardon, at p. 223 in pred. xxiii. The creed, at p. 110 in the *Terza parte, predica iiii*. The direct allusion to the "Preacher," at page 181, from which it would seem that Valdés had instructed him in his view of alms-giving, will be found in *Terza parte, predica lxiiii.*, *Qual sia l'ordine della carità*.

Having pointed out this coincidence to the Spanish translator, he is of opinion that Ochino was undoubtedly "the Preacher" so frequently mentioned by the speakers in the dialogue; and to corroborate this view he has furnished the following passage literally translated from Giannone, *Istoria di Napoli*, lib. xxxii. cap. 5. pp. 81-2. La Haya, 1753: . . . . "Tenia en aquellos tiempos mucho renombre en Italia, i por fama de grán Oradór era mui zelebrado, Bernardino Occhino de Siena, fraile Capuchino, el qual se había hecho famoso, sobre todos los otros de su

tiempo, tanto por su doctrina, i eloquenzia, i por austeridad de vida, como también por un modo nuevo suyo de predicár el Evangelio, no con disputas escolásticas, i otras extravagánzias, como hazían otros hasta su tiempo, sinó con espíritu, i vehemenzia, i con fervór admirable, por lo que se había adquirido gran crédito, no solo zerca del Pueblo, sinó también zerca de los mayores Prinzipes de Italia . . . . . procuraron, que en la Cuaresma de aquel año de 1536, viniese a predicár a Nápoles: él vino, con satisfacció grandísima de la Zúddad, que tuvo el gusto, hallándose alli entonzes el Emperadór [Carlos V.], de hazerlo también oír por tan gran Prinzipes. Predicó él en S. Juan Mayór, con tanto apláuso i admirazió, que había desbancado, todas los otros Predicadores, pues que, a porfía, todo la Zúddad corría a sus Sermones: i refiere Gregorio Rosso, testigo de vista que en aquellas días de Cuaresma, íba a oírle, con frecuencia, el Emperadór, a la iglesia de S. Juan, con mucho gusto suyo, a cause de que (como él dize) predicaba con [tal] espíritu, i devozió [tan] grande, que hazía llorar los piedras."

A treatise by John Wickliffe, written so early as 1380, has furnished Ochino with his manner of treating the subject of Antichrist in his *Predica LXV.* in the *Seconda parte delle prediche; L' Imagine d' Antechristo*, as may be seen by a comparison of it with "Of Antechrist and his Meynee" (followers), in "Three Treatises, by John Wycklyffe, D.D., now first printed from a manuscript in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, by James Henthorn Todd, D.D., Dublin, 1851," pp. cxv.-cliv. Ochino would have probably read it in Latin. His sermon on Antichrist was translated into Spanish, and circulated as a tract about the year 1558 with the title "*Imagen del Antechristo* compuesta primero en Italiano y despues traducida en Romance



por Alonso de peñafuerte." See the edition 1849, 12mo. It appeared also in French before the year 1551.

NOTE 25. Page xxxix.

*Diálogo de la Lengua.* Madrid, 1860, p. xxiii.

*Il Valdés leggeva in sua Casa l'istesse Epistole che leggeva P. Martire. Il Flaminio in quel di Sessa e di Caserta faceua Sermoni di Vita Spirituale.*

Valdés read in his own house the same Epistles as Peter Martyr . . . In that of Sessa and of Caserta, Flaminio delivered Sermons on the Spiritual Life.

Antonio Caracciolo, *Vita e Gesti di Paulo IV.* British Museum, Harleian MSS. No. 1763, fol. 113 vto.

NOTE 26. Page liii.

*Accadde appresso, cioè nel 1535 che con Carlo V. venne in Roma un D. Gio. Valdés nobile Spagnuolo . . . Era costui (mi disse il Card. di Monreale, che se lo ricordava) di bell' aspetto e di dolcissime maniere, ed d' un parlare soave ed attrattivo ; faceua professione di Lingue e di sacra Scrittura, s' annido in Napoli.* A. Caracciolo. *Vita e Gesti di Paulo IV.* MS.

• "It happened about this time, that is, in the year 1535, there came with Charles V. [from Naples] to Rome one Don Juan de Valdés, a Spanish nobleman." . . . "He was, as the Cardinal of Monreale, who remembered him, told me, of a fair countenance, very sweet manners, and attractive speech ; he professed a knowledge of languages and of the Holy Scriptures. He was settled at Naples." Charles V. arrived at Naples from Tunis, Nov. 25th, 1535.

NOTE 27. Page lv.

*Lettere volgari di diversi nobilissimi Huomini. Vinegia, 1544, fol. 32.* The letter of Bonfadio appeared in the first edition, 1542. It concludes thus: "Pero à me non incresce haverne poche, perche dubiterei qualche volta, che non s' ammutinassero, e mi lasciassero in terra come un goffo. Vorrei vivere, s' io potessi: cosi esorto vostra Signoria che faccia, le bascio la mano. Nostro Signore le dia quella prosperità di vita, ch'ella desidera. Dal Lago di Garda."

NOTE 28. Page lv.

*Memorie di tre Principesse della famiglia Gonzaga offerte a sua ecc. il signor Conte Stefano Sanvitale Parmigiano gentilhuomo di camera con esercito ed essente delle reali guardie del corpo di S. A. R., in occasione delle sue felicissime nozze con sua eccel. la Signora Principessa Donna Luigia Gonzaga Mantovana. Parma, 1787, 4to.* The account of Giulia Gonzaga occupies eighty-four pages. It is also in the *Raccolta Ferrarese. Venigia, 1781, vol. viii.* pp. 147-188.

NOTE 29. Page lv.

Litta. *Memorie di Celebri Famiglie Italiane*, fol. Milano. Fasc. XXV. to XL. contain genealogies and splendid illustrations of the Gonzaga and Colonna families, and at the end of each a list of authors who have written upon their history; in Fasc. XXXIII. 1835, Tavola XX., are those of the Gonzagas of Mantua; Tavola XIV. gives the branch of the Dukes of Sabbionetta, extinct in 1591.

NOTE 30. Page lvii.

Hilarion de Coste. "Après la mort de son mary . . . .  
iamais elle ne vouloit bannir de son cœur l'affection qu'elle

luy avoit portée; ce que luy fit prendre pour devise la fleur que nous appellons *Amarante* \*, ou *Passe-velous*, que les Médecins et les Herbiere appellent *Fleur d'Amour*; car comme cette belle fleur, qui passe de couleur le velous cramoi si rouge, lors que toutes les autres fleurs sont desia passées, est encore fraische, et ne se fane point; de sorte que les Bouquetières en font des bouquets en plein hyuer: ainsi son amour ne se diminuëtoit, ne se changeroit, ou ne s'esteindroit iamais durant les tristes jours, et les funestes années de sa viduité, comme declarent ces mots tirez de Vergile en ses Bucoliques, qui animoient cette belle devise: *NON MORITURA*: Elle ne mourra point."

Les Eloges de les Vies des Reynes, Princesses et des Dames illustrées en pieté, en courage et en doctrine. Paris, 1647, 4to. tom. ii. p. 97.

\* *Gomphrena*, the globe amaranth, supposed to be the amaranth of the poets, worn by the Thessalians at the funeral of Achilles.

#### NOTE 31. Page lvii.

The second book of the Eneid, translated by Hipolito de Medici, was printed at Rome in 1538, 4to., and in Venice in 1539.

The copy I have seen forms part of a small volume, with the title: *I sei primi libri del Eneide di Vergilio, Tradotti à piu illustre et honorate Donne, et tra l'altre à la nobilissima e diuina Madonna Aurelia Tolomei de Borghesi, à cui ancho e indirizzato tutto il presente uolume. M.D.XXXX. (in Vinetia).*

*Il secondo di Vergilio di Hipolito de Medici Cardinale a la Signora Givlia Gonzaga. M.D.XXXX. (23 leaves).* It has the following short dedication: *Alla illvstrissima Signora Givlia Gonzaga. Illvstrissima Signora.*

*Perche spesso ad uno oppresso da grave male l'esempio d'un maggior alleggerisce il martire: non trouando io a la pena mia altro rimedio, uolsi l'animo al' incendio di Troia, e misurando con quello il mio, conobbi senza dubbio nessun male entro a quelle mura esser auuenuto, che nel mezzo del mio petto un simil non si senta, loquale cercando in parte sfogare di quel di Troia dolendomi ho scoperto il mio: onde lo mando a uoi, accioche egli per uera somiglianza ui mostri gli affanni miei poi che ne i sospiri, ne le lagrime, ne 'l color mio ue l' han potuto mostrar giamai.*

## NOTE 32. Page lx.

The picture of Giulia Gonzaga, painted by Sebastiano, went into the collection of Francis I. of France, at Fontainebleau. A portrait, said to be the same, having the attributes of a saint, S. Agatha or S. Apollonia, the nimbus and pincers, afterwards adorned the Borghese palace at Rome. It was purchased by the Rev. W. Holwell Carr, and bequeathed by him to the National Gallery, London, together with a companion picture by the same master containing portraits of the painter and his patron, that represents the artist taking up a purse from a document which the Cardinal appears to have just written.

## NOTE 33. Page lx.

Vita di Giulia Gonzaga, MS.

## NOTE 34. Page lxi.

The letter is given in Spanish by Affo; it is addressed to Giulia Gonzaga, signed by Charles V., and countersigned by his secretary Idiaques. *Memorie di tre Principesse*, p. 40.

## NOTE 35. Page lxiii.

See the WILL in the Appendix III. pp. 235-242.

## NOTE 36. Page lxiii.

La valerosa Matrona spedì ben tosto *Marc'antonio Magno suo Procuratore* all' Imperador Carlo V., non solamente a fine d' impetrare al Nipote l' Investitura dello Stato di Lombardia, ma per ottenere eziandio, che fossero mutati gli amministratori dello Stato medesimo, chiedendo, che loro si surrogassero il Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga, e Don Ferrante Vicerè di Sicilia fratello di lui. La qual cosa parendo a Cesare molto ragionevole, fu di buon grado accordata, e fu spedito il diploma favorevole il giorno 6. di Settembre 1541. — Affo, *Vita di Vespasiano Gonzaga*, pp. 4-5.

## NOTE 37. Page lxiii.

Affo gives a list of the Hebrew books printed at Sabbionetta, amounting to thirty-one, in his *Vita di Vespasiano Gonzaga duca di Sabbionetta, etc.* Parma, 1780, 4to. pp. 145-168.

## NOTE 38. Page lxiv.

Trial and Martyrdom of Pietro Carnesecchi, etc., by Richard Gibbins, 1856, p. 22. Lami, *Antichità Toscane e specialmente della città di Firenze*, 1766, 4to.



*Facsimile of the ancient Title.*

A L P H A B E T O  
C H R I S T I A N O ,

C H E I N S E G N A L A V E R A  
V I A D ' A C Q V I S T A R E  
I L L V M E D E L L O S P I =  
R I T O S A N T O .



*Stampata con gratia & priuilegio .*

*L'Anno M. D. XLVI.*





**A L F A B E T O**  
**CHRISTIANO,**

**WHICH TEACHES THE TRUE WAY  
TO ACQUIRE THE LIGHT OF  
THE HOLY SPIRIT.**



*Printed, with permission and privilege,  
in the year M. D.' XLVI.*

## MARCO ANTONIO MAGNO

*to the Most Illustrious Lady,  
the Signora Donna Giulia Gonzaga,  
his Patroness.*

*Having read the dialogue in the Spanish language, entitled Alfabeto Christiano, written by a person who truly did not seek honour to his name, yet who has indeed acquired it,—a treatise inciting the reader to Christian piety more than any I have ever read,—it seemed to me that it would still more excite me to pursue the true way of Christ, which it teaches, if I translated it into our Italian language as closely as my knowledge would permit. And not being solicitous to write the Tuscan dialect in other respects than so as to make it well understood, I use almost the same words that the author himself employed. And thus I send to your most Illustrious Ladyship the effigy of yourself, that you may see whether I have known how to make it discourse as persuasively in your language, as the author of the work has made it conduce, by such divine arguments, to the love of the Holy Spirit, in his own.*

TO THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS *f. 2.*  
 LADY, SIGNORA  
 DONNA GIULIA GONZAGA.

Constrained by the commands of your most Illustrious Ladyship, contrary to my own opinion, I have written in form of dialogue all that religious conversation in which we were so deeply interested the other day when returning from the Sermon, that only the night made it necessary for us to break it off. If I rightly remember, no point on which we then discoursed is here omitted, nor is any subject we then discussed left unexamined. Read it when you have leisure; and if anything be wanting, or is superfluous, or if anything afresh occur to you in reply to what is here stated, inform me of it; because by erasing the one and inserting the other, the Dialogue will at length be left perfectly conformable to your wishes; for my purpose in writing it has solely been to please and satisfy your Ladyship.

This reason may serve at the same time as an answer to such persons who, on reading this Dialogue, may think it much too strict and rigid, and as a reply to others to whom it may appear as much too free and unguarded: they not reflecting that I did not discourse it with them, nor write it for them, but I discourse it with your Ladyship, and write it *for* your Ladyship; including, however, all such persons who, in your name, and as an affair entirely your own, may incline to make use and avail themselves of it.

In return for the labour I have for several days employed in writing this treatise, I desire from your Ladyship only two things. One is, that you may give to that which you will here read, no trust or belief further than as it appears and is made clear to you, that it has foundation in the Scriptures, and invites and leads you forward to that perfect Christian charity which is the mark by which Christ desires that His followers should be distinguished from all other persons. The other thing is: that you make use of this Dialogue as

children use a Grammar when they learn Latin, in the manner of a CHRISTIAN ALPHABET, in which you may learn the rudiments of Christian perfection, making it your aim, the elements being attained, to leave the alphabet and apply your soul to things more important, more excellent, more divine. It is expedient that your Ladyship do as I say, as much for your own advantage as for my safety. Because if you do so, I shall not then have fallen into the error of those persons who sell their own writings and imaginations at the same price for which they barter holy Scripture, nor your Ladyship, into the mistake, far more hurtful than beneficial, into which those persons fall, who with a pious simplicity apply themselves to the mere writings of men, without looking for something far beyond them. It frequently happens to such persons, that finding in those writings the milk of the doctrine of rudiments, they take so much relish in it, that *f. 3.* persuading themselves they can gain from it the higher consolations that belong to Christian perfection, they are not careful to go onward, seeking the aliment of the perfect

Christian, which is to be found in the sacred Scriptures alone. Because those only in some measure accommodate themselves to the capacity of them that read, who at the first give the milk of the word and afterwards present the stronger food to the more proficient for their nourishment. Hence it arises that such persons, depending upon men and always reading their writings, remain imperfect, and yet frequently judge of and satisfy themselves that they are most perfect. Now desiring that your Ladyship may never judge nor satisfy yourself that you are perfect, but that you may be so in reality, both in the view of God and of the world, I wish you not so to read this composition, nor to hold it in greater estimation than ought to be given to the writings of one who, desirous to gratify you in this Christian object, only points out to you the way by which you may arrive at Christ himself and become united with Him.

And I desire that your Christian intention may be, to make Christ the peaceful possessor of your heart, in such a manner that He may absolutely and without contradiction rule and

regulate all your purposes. And when your Ladyship shall have done this, believe me that you will not feel the want of anything whatsoever in this present life that can give you entire contentment and repose. Because Christ himself will dispose all things and provide the most pleasant banquets for you, even the knowledge of his Divinity, in which in quietness and confidence you shall lie down and slumber. And when I shall know and see that your Ladyship is in this glorious state, assured and certain of your spiritual progress, I shall not hesitate to believe that my intention in this work has been altogether one of Christian concern, and that your Ladyship has perused it with a mind, pure, humble, and discreet.

May God, our Lord, make it suitable for your most illustrious Ladyship's need, and for the object which I, as your most affectionate servant, perpetually desire!





## ALFABETO CHRISTIANO.

f. 4.

GIULIA GONZAGA. JUAN DE VALDÉS.

GIULIA. I have so much confidence in our friendship, that I seem as though I could freely communicate to you even those things that we scarcely discover to the ears of a confessor. Therefore, wishing now to impart to you some things nearer to me than life itself, I entreat you, if you have not more important business elsewhere, to listen attentively to what I wish to say to you. And notice, if you think you cannot attend closely to me now, through having your thoughts engaged elsewhere, tell me with all freedom; for if so, I can defer it to another day.

VALDÉS. On the contrary, Signora, I gain a favour by whatever you command me; and you know already that I have no business which can hinder me, especially in what relates to your service.

GIULIA. Now, setting aside all vain rhetoric and useless ceremony, which between us are quite superfluous, I wish you to know that I

live almost continually so dissatisfied with myself, and in like manner with everything in the world, and so out of conceit with them, that if you saw my heart, I am sure you would pity me; for in it you would find, if not confusion, at least inquietude and perplexity. And of these I have now more, now less, according to the nature of the circumstances that present themselves. But I never feel so much calmness of mind, that wishing to settle it, I can conclusively understand what it is that I would wish for, or what thing would satisfy it, or with what it would rest contented. Hence, I cannot conceive what can now be offered to me, sufficient to remove this, my confusion of mind, appease my inquietude, and resolve this perplexity. Many years have I lived in the manner I describe, and during this time, as you know, various circumstances have happened to me sufficient to disturb a tranquil spirit, much more a soul so disquieted and confused as mine. Besides this, you know, that at the first sermons I heard from our Preacher, you persuaded me by your words,

that by means of this doctrine, I should be able to tranquillise and settle my mind in peace; but now, at last, I find it altogether the reverse of what I thought. And although I attribute this more to my own imperfections than to any defect in him, yet altogether it gives me pain to perceive that my hopes have not succeeded. This disappointment might be tolerable, yet it is the worse, that, instead of being cured of one infirmity, I have entered into another, without being released from the former. This is a most heavy and cruel contrariety, so much so, that I feel so weary and disgusted with myself, that tears frequently come into my eyes through not knowing what to do with myself, or what to lean upon. The sermons of the Preacher have engendered *f. 5.* this contrariety in my mind. Through them I see myself violently assailed, on one side by the fear of hell and the love of paradise, and on the other by the dread of people's tongues and the love of the world's honour. In this manner two kinds of fears and two of affections, or, to speak more correctly, two affections of fear and two different ones of love,

are what fight within me, and have kept me such as I am for some days. If you could feel what I now feel, you might truly wonder how I can pass it off and conceal it as I do. This is what I find within me, and in this state, good and bad, which I have described as well as I have known how, my concerns remain. Now, since you have shown so much affection and good will to aid me in my outward affairs, I entreat you to be ready to assist and counsel me in these interior things, because I very well know, that if you are willing, you have more skill to assist me in these, than in the others.

VALDÉS. Say freely, Signora, all that you wish to ask of me, and you may be assured that I will always expend in your service all that I know and am able to do.

GIULIA. In such confidence I have entered into this conversation with you, in the first instance, in order that you may tell me from what cause you believe the confusion, doubt, and perplexity spring, which for so long a time I have felt in my mind, and whether you think they can be remedied, and

what means can be used for the purpose. This said, you will tell me concerning the contradictions that have arisen in me after I heard these sermons, whether it would be possible by any way to quiet my mind, either by assent, or really by resistance, because this tempest of affections and appetites, of imaginations and diversities of will, it cannot endure much longer; and I wish you not to lose time with excusing yourself by your usual, not to say feigned humility, which in such a case you are accustomed frequently to use.

VALDÉS. On the contrary, without more reflection, I will at once make a beginning. Yet, I wish you first to make me one promise.

GIULIA. What promise?

VALDÉS. It is this, that, if I make you truly comprehend, from what cause your confusion, inquietude, and contradictions proceed, and show you the way by which you can be freed from them, you will give me your assurance and word, that you will walk in it.

GIULIA. If in this manner I might be so certain that you would do what you say, as I am certain that in such case I would do what

you ask of me, I should already begin to quiet myself.

VALDÉS. Now then, I hope, not so much from any skill, or sufficiency of my own, as in the affection and willingness I have to serve you, and likewise in your lively understanding and lucid judgment, and above all in the grace of God, that before I leave this place, you shall not only learn what you wish, but you shall know and understand the way by which you can free yourself from your former infirmity and its consequences. Be very attentive, Signora, because upon every single thing which I shall say to you, you can reply to me what may occur to you.

GIULIA. I will do so.

f. 6. VALDÉS. Then in order to understand, Signora, whence proceed the travail and confusion, which you say you have felt for so many years, I wish you would turn over in your memory how that *man is made in the image and likeness of God*.

GIULIA. Let me understand what this *image* and *likeness* of God is.

VALDÉS. I wish rather that St. Paul may

explain it to you, and thus you will understand it by what he says to the Colossians, where, admonishing them to speak the truth one to another, he counsels them to put off the Old man with his deeds, and to put on the New man, who is renewed in knowledge conformable to the *image* and *likeness* of Him who created him.<sup>1</sup> And you will also understand it by what St. Paul again says to those of Ephesus, reminding them, that by becoming Christians they have learned to put off the Old man and to be renewed in the spirit and clothed with the New man, who is created in the *image* and *likeness* of God.<sup>2</sup> From this it appears that in such a degree as man possesses and retains in himself the *image* and *likeness* of God, in the same measure he sees and knows, understands and relishes spiritual things, in a spiritual life and conversation. This truly known, and what objects you set before your mind well scrutinised, you will understand clearly how all the inquietude, all the travail, all the confusion you feel, arises; because your soul desires you to procure its

<sup>1</sup> Col. iii. 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. iv. 22-24.

restitution to the *image* of God to which it was created, and of which it appears you have deprived it. Submitting to your appetites, and persisting in crossing this image, you have put before it things earthly and transitory, not by any means worthy of that excellence for which it was created. For this reason it cannot be satisfied, or contented with any of these things. It seems to you that it knows not what it wishes for, and hence you know not how to set before it that which it would desire. This state of mind that happens to you, ever befalls worldly persons who having attained to a reflective intellect and clear judgment, knowing truly that their souls find not, nor ever can find, entire satisfaction in outward things, turn themselves to seek for it in things relating to the mind. Yet as the supernatural Light, by which alone truth is discovered, seen, and known, is wanting to them, they go wandering in a labyrinth of appearances and opinions. And thus some seek happiness in one thing, some in another. I think it not worth while to refer here to examples, because this is not the point of your



proposition. It is enough that you know this, that all these persons deceive themselves, and can never shadow out, nor reach to the symbols of the things in which true happiness consists, who, if they had had a little of the light of faith, would most easily, and with the grace of God, have acquired it, and thus they would have quieted and pacified their souls. Have you now understood the cause whence your *f. 7.* inquietude, confusion, and labour proceed?

GIULIA. Yes, very well.

VALDÉS. Now then you know that they may surely be remedied, and that the remedy is in your own hands.

GIULIA. In my hands?

VALDÉS. Yes! in your hands. Because whenever you determine yourself to do what I tell you, and which St. Paul tells you, respecting the renewing and restoring within you the *image* and *likeness* of God, you will find peace, quiet, and repose of spirit.

GIULIA. And how must I do this?

VALDÉS. By withdrawing it from things fallen and transitory, and by applying it to those that are fixed and eternal; not wishing,

nor endeavouring to feed it with things corporal, but spiritual, not nourishing it with things worldly, but with things celestial. And in this manner your spirit finding its proper aliment, and seeing itself clothed with the New man in the *image* and *likeness* of which it was created, it will always live content and cheerful; and here in this present life it will begin to taste of that felicity which it expects to enjoy for ever in the life eternal, being thus that the happiness of man consists in his knowledge of God and of Christ shown by the light of faith, and in the union of the soul with God through faith, hope, and charity. To this happiness only the true Christian can arrive.

GIULIA. I should well believe this you say, because indeed it appears founded in reason, but as I know many persons who have as much, and perhaps more cancelled the *image* of God than I have done, and who do not present to their minds things more spiritual than I present to mine, yet they live in pleasure, finding content and satisfaction in the things of this world; so that I know not what to believe.

VALDÉS. Such persons' minds dwell in a low and vulgar state, and therefore low and mean objects give them satisfaction. But a spirit, generous and refined like yours, cannot calm itself and take repose, except in that greatness for which it was created. Hence, I repeat, if you are disgusted and live with your mind in confusion, it is because you do not turn it to things spiritual and divine, and because you continually fix its consideration upon these low and transitory concerns. You will better understand it by this comparison.

Two persons set out from this place to go to Spain. One of them is so careless and forgetful of his purpose, that whenever anything amusing or delightful occurs on the way he not only partakes of it and enjoys it, but quite forgets his principal journey, and gratifies his body and mind, stopping on the road. The other on the contrary is so solicitous and punctual, that with all the entertainments and feasts that are offered to him he will not taste or enjoy any, because he knows and is sure that he is not to remain there; nay, they are frequently displeasing and distasteful to

him, considering them as hindrances and interruptions of his journey. And such earthly-minded persons even now have a want of satisfaction in these things whenever their principal journey becomes more impressed on their remembrance, and although at times  
f. 8. they forget <sup>f</sup>themselves and lose sight of their object, there remains impressed upon their memory altogether a something, I know not what, which causes them to find no true enjoyment in anything that the journey presents to them.

Such are we in this life. We are all born and created to know God, to believe God, to love God, and after this state of existence to enjoy God. And yet there are some who feed on the pleasures of this world, not only delighting and giving themselves up to rest in them, but who are wholly forgetful of that other life for which they were created. There are also others who, being offered the same delights and pleasures, enjoy them not, nor take relish in them; nay, they are often insipid and distasteful, keeping always in view that other life for which God created them. And al-

though for a time these forget themselves, losing the remembrance of the other life, yet because God stands ever at the door and calls them, it will be impossible that they should find relish and enjoyment in things of this world; and if they expect or endeavour to find them here, they will live in confusion, disgust, and inquietude, as you are living, Signora. In the same manner then, like him who knows how to taste of the things of this world, yet does not enjoy them as things suitable to his better nature, or that will be lasting, but who looks at them as the curious beholder views them, turning away from the recreations and banquets offered to him by the way,—I wish, Signora, you to do the same. Turn within yourself, open the ears of your soul, so that you may hear the voice of God, and think as a true Christian that in this life you can have no other real contentment and rest, than what will come to you by means of the knowledge of God, through the faith and love of God. Settle your mind in this consideration; most earnestly putting aside all those things that are transitory and cannot

endure. Doing this, I promise that you will occupy a much shorter time in quieting, soothing, and giving peace to your mind than you have spent in disturbing it. And if you do not thus overcome it, I am content that you should never give credit to anything I may say to you.

GIULIA. Truly I believe that you have divined the source whence my infirmity proceeds, without erring in a single point. O God, do thou assist me! How blindly do we worldly persons go on! Even now I am sure that you have divined how to give me the medicine by which I shall be healed of my weakness. It only remains that I put my trust in God and take it. I have no doubt that it will heal me, so much the more having such a physician as you on my side.

VALDÉS. The true physician of the soul is Christ crucified. Put all your confidence in Him alone, and you will discover the remedy.

GIULIA. From what you have said, one doubt has come to my recollection, on which I am often accustomed to think; I entreat you to tell me how it appears to you.

VALDÉS. Ask it freely.

GIULIA. I wish to know from you how it comes to pass that people fall into such blindness, and go on lost in the things that gratify the senses, forgetful chiefly of those which they ought continually to care for?

VALDÉS. These are remains of original sin.

GIULIA. This is what I do not comprehend. They say, God pardons original sin in baptism. Since it is thus he pardons us, how is it that there remains with us these evil inclinations and this blindness, being so prejudicial to our salvation?

VALDÉS. Signora, you must understand it in this manner. In original sin two things are to be considered, one the guilt, the other the inclination to evil, which is that of which you speak. And it is thus; in baptism through faith, God pardons us the guilt of sin, and as to the inclination to evil he goes on medicating and curing it by his grace, little by little, in such a manner, that a person may, by the grace and favour of God, so much perfect himself as almost to come to lose all

evil inclinations, all unrestrained appetites, and all inordinate affections that reign in us through original sin. Conformable to this is that saying of St. Augustine, that the Spirit of God restores and renews in us the *image* and *likeness* of God to which we were created. But you will understand it better by this example.

A great nobleman has a servant whom he loves and to whom he shows much grace and favour. This servant commits a serious offence against his lord, for which he not only deprives him of all favour and grace, but with just indignation sentences him to death. It happens at the time, that a person in high favour with the nobleman entreats for that servant, to whom, in consideration for such person, he graciously gives pardon of his life, and although he does not admit him to the same place in his favour as before he had sinned, he gives him the entry of his palace and chamber, so that he may in time return to occupy the station in which he stood at first.

GIULIA. By this example I completely com-



prehend it, and am so well satisfied that I remain tranquil, and am without any scruple as to this point. So you may believe that you have accomplished not a little.

VALDÉS. If I were conversing with a person of a low, gross, and unpolished understanding, I might well think I had already done something ; but addressing whom I do, I have need of a little diligence to make you capable to receive the truth in a manner that shall not leave me wherewith to pride myself, if it were only for the credit you give to my words.

GIULIA. Come now, no more of this. Let us come to the subject, and tell me your sentiments about the mental contradiction that I feel.

VALDÉS. I say, Signora, that as I pity and regret that you are living under the confusion of mind, of which we have just now spoken, so also I am pleased and satisfied that you feel the contradiction of which you speak.

GIULIA. Why so?

VALDÉS. I will tell you. I regret the confusion, because it proceeds from your fault, as we have said, and tends to your injury, *as f. 10.*

you yourself experience ; and I am pleased at the contradiction of mind, because I know that it proceeds from this : that the preaching of the Gospel produces its first effect in you.

GIULIA. Why do you call this contradiction the first effect of preaching the Gospel?

VALDÉS. Because the first thing that light does when entering into a dark room is to scatter the darkness unseen before, and to discover and show what is not seen in the obscurity ; so in the same manner, when the light of evangelical truth begins to shine in the soul of a worldly person, dispersing in some degree the darkness and obscurity, as well of the senses as of human reason, it scatters and chases away in light, what the darkness covered, and then when such a person turns within himself he begins to feel, that what he before regarded as good is evil ; what he judged to be true is false ; and that which seemed to him sweet is bitter. And because of our incapacity and fragility, the light of this evangelical truth shines not so much at first in our souls as would suffice to scatter from them at once all the obscurity, so that they could clearly

and manifestly know the nature and existence of these things. It then happens that, the darkness contending with the light, and human reason with the Christian spirit, these contests cause them to feel those *earthquakes* of inward contradiction that you, Signora, now feel. We have so many instances of this, as well in the history of Christ which the Evangelists wrote, as in what St. Luke wrote of the acts of the Apostles, and also in the epistles of St. Paul, that if I wished to quote all the passages one by one, I should spend all our time in doing this; and not to spend the time in doing so, I will leave them for you, since you have the New Testament in Italian, to read them there yourself, I pointing them out to you. I only wish to tell you this: that you should consider these contradictions of mind which you feel, as a gift and blessing from God, and you should make use of them as such, giving place to the Light as it shines more and more in your soul. In this manner you will become freed from the contradiction, and will put yourself into a capacity to receive the other gifts of God, which will be sweet

and well-flavoured. May God preserve you, Signora, from not feeling this contradiction, because not to feel it is a sign of hardness and obstinacy.

GIULIA. In conclusion, this is the decision; that I cannot conclude to understand both you and the other. All the Preacher's theme is to say, that the preaching of the Gospel soothes and pacifies the conscience, and now you say quite the contrary. I know not what to say, except that I do not understand you.

VALDÉS. Then I will make you understand us, and, comprehending it, you will know that we both speak rightly, and that there is no contradiction in our language. And it is thus: the Preacher says very truly that the preaching of the Gospel soothes and pacifies the conscience. Yet you must understand that it produces this effect in all those persons who

f. 11. receive and embrace Christ through faith, in a way that by means of preaching the Gospel, which announces remission and pardon of sin by Christ, faith soothes and pacifies the conscience, yet only of those persons who have

living and entire faith. So also I speak truly that the same preaching begets contradiction, terror, and dismay, yet it is in those persons who hear the preaching, although they do not thereon determine to embrace the truth through faith, nor keep it, except as it may be merely for a rule of moral doctrine. Finding that it is opposed to their affections and appetites, and desiring to make it conform to them, at one time they desire one thing, and at another time they wish another, and not concluding to determine themselves, they truly feel one of the effects of the gospel preaching, but do not enjoy the fruition of it. Have you understood it?

GIULIA. Yes, very well. But I do not understand why you are pleased to see me in this state of contradiction.

VALDÉS. Because it is a sign that you hearken to the doctrine; and although the evangelical preaching does not exercise in you its chief office, which is that described by the Preacher, I may be glad that at least it executes the office of the Law, which is what I describe to you, and I hope, in the grace of

God, that after the preaching has performed in you the office of the Law, it will then exercise the service of the Gospel.

GIULIA. I imagine that I can nearly understand what you wish to explain, but I shall have pleasure in learning a little more particularly what is the office of the Law, and what the office of the Gospel.

VALDÉS. Indeed it is most proper, Signora, that you should comprehend both of them. Know then that the Law is the rule of conscience, and it is thus, that conscience is no other than the Law understood; whose office is to evidence sin, and also to increase it. St. Paul means both by experience, and as he truly had experienced it, he writes to the Romans, in that his most excellent epistle, and says himself, that the Law works wrath, because persons are angry, disgustful, and variable when restricted by the Law. (Rom. viii.) He says more, that the Law is spiritual, for it is not observed in its integrity, nor rightly understood, unless the person is a spiritual person. The prophets call the Law a heavy yoke, a rigorous sceptre, and other names of

this kind, which signify severity. And when God gave the Law to Moses, the people of Israel, who stood at the foot of the mountain, saw great lightnings and thunderings, so that all trembled with fear and dismay. All say, that these things signify the terror, alarm, and conflict of the affections which the Law generates in those minds to whom it is given. But with all this, you, Signora, ought to know that the Law is very needful to you, for if you had not the Law you would not have conscience, and if without conscience, sin would not be known, and if sin were not known, we should not humble ourselves, and if we did not humble ourselves, we should not obtain grace, if we did not obtain grace, *f.* 12. we should not be justified, and not being justified, our souls would not be saved. And this I believe St. Paul wishes to be understood where he says, that the Law is as a school-master or governor who leads and conducts us to Christ, although by means of faith we are justified.<sup>1</sup> Here you perceive the office of the Law. The Gospel executes the same office in

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iii. 24.

those persons who receive it only as law; but in them who receive it as an ambassador or messenger of grace its especial office is to heal the wounds made by the Law, to preach grace, peace, and remission of sins; to calm and pacify the conscience; to give strength to accomplish what the Law shows us to be the will of God, and by which the enemies of the soul are warred with, and by which they are overcome and beaten down to the ground. And thus Christ comes to them compassionate, humble, pacific, and full of love and charity, and not terrible and alarming like the Law. In this manner the Law teaches us what we have to do, the Gospel gives us spirit by which we are enabled to fulfil it. The Law makes the wound, the Gospel heals it, and finally, the Law slays, the Gospel gives life. I do not care to go on confirming this with the authority of the sacred Scriptures, not to occupy the time.

GIULIA. You have done very well. Do not trouble yourself if you do not quote your authorities; when you shall say anything that appears difficult to me, I will ask you



to prove it to me by some authority from Scripture.

VALDÉS. Let it be so. And since you have already understood the office of the Law and of the Gospel, by this too you will more clearly discover the source whence springs the contradiction that you feel, it will be as well that we go forward.

GIULIA. I wish first that you would tell me a little more about this subject.

VALDÉS. I know not what more to tell you, if I do not go into particulars.

GIULIA. Now this is what I wish.

VALDÉS. The Preacher, Signora, by his sermons, has awakened in your remembrance what you already had conceived of heaven and hell, and has known so well how to picture it to you that the fear of hell makes you love heaven, and the love of heaven makes you dread hell. And in connection with showing you this, he tells you that you cannot fly from hell except through the observance and keeping of the law and the doctrine of Christ. And as he declares this to you in a manner it seems to you that you cannot perform with-

out hazard of being whispered about, disesteemed, undervalued, and considered as little by people of the world, the forecast for the future life conflicting within you on one side, and on the other an unwillingness to bear the troubles of this, so the contradiction you feel is generated. All this is born of the *amor proprio* with which you love yourself. You fear hell for your own interest, you love f. 13. heaven for your own interest, you fear the confusion of the world for your own interest, you love the glory and honour of the world for your own interest. Thus in everything you fear and love, if strictly noticed, you will discover yourself there.

GIULIA. Then whom do you wish that I should find in my own things if not myself?

VALDÉS. I wish that you should again find God, and not yourself, if you wish to be free from contradiction, confusion, inquietude, discontent, and a thousand other discomforts beside, from which you can never become freed ; but when you find God, you will find peace, serenity, quietness, content, cheerfulness, and courage, and such an infinitude of

spiritual blessings, that you will not know how to gather them. Now if you wish to slight him, and if you are willing to deprive yourself of heaven and bind yourself to hell, through unwillingness to go a little out of yourself, and enter into God, why, see you to it. For myself, I assure you that there is nothing in the world that could give me equal satisfaction and content, than to see you walk in this Christian path, because I know your mind so well inclined, I hold it certain that if you begin to enamour yourself with God, you will surpass in the victory of holiness many of those saints who stand in heaven.

GIULIA. Indeed I desire no other thing; God knows my wishes.

VALDÉS. Then why do you not take what you desire?

GIULIA. Because I do not know how to do so.

VALDÉS. Force, force, Signora, is the only means the Gospel concern demands. And so Christ said: "from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xi. 12.

Thus if you wish to take the kingdom of heaven, do violence to Yourself, and so you will fear nothing, because, as a Spanish lady of high rank said, although I think not upon this subject [*Quien a sí venze, á nadie teme*], he who conquers himself fears no one.

GIULIA. Let us leave mere words ; the fact is, that I indeed believe all my confusion, my inquietude, and my contradiction of mind would cease by entering upon the way of God, and for this reason I would resolve to enter upon it immediately, but it seems to me so difficult to find, that I dare not set myself to seek it.

VALDÉS. What do you see that makes it so troublesome to find?

GIULIA. I see few who walk by that road.

VALDÉS. In this you are so far right that few walk in it. But you should know, that this does not arise so much from the difficulty of the way as from our own evil nature and imperfection. And because I desire to confirm you in this truth, I wish you to know that in the present life you will discover five kinds of persons. Some there are who

know not the way of God, neither wish to know it, because they foresee that by walking in that way they must deprive themselves of their amusements and pleasures. And these persons, although they do not speak it with the lips, yet from the heart they use the language that Job utters when noticing the wickedness of the impious: "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways."<sup>1</sup> *f.* 14. The same says David: "the fool hath said in his heart there is no God,"<sup>2</sup> because in reality, they wish that there were no God. You will find other persons who know the way of God, but overcome by their affections and appetites, they do not conclusively determine to walk in it. Christ says of such: "the servant who knew his lord's will and did it not shall be beaten with many stripes."<sup>3</sup> And truly it is so also here in this world. Such persons feel a continual remorse of conscience which keeps them discontented and without enjoyment.

You will find another kind of persons who desire and have the will to learn and know the

<sup>1</sup> Job xxi. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xiv. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xii. 47.

way of God, but being bound by the love of the things of this present life, and taking supreme delight in them, they are not willing to give them up, and so they do not dispose themselves, in a manner that God should teach and show them his way. Satan directly sets before such persons certain masked passages, which he gives them to understand are the right paths, and they, blind with love of themselves, willingly yield themselves to be deceived and injured by supposing that God carries them whilst it is the devil who is leading them. Hence are born superfluous ceremonies; hence arise pernicious superstitions; hence come false worships. God says of such persons by Isaiah: "they seek me daily, wishing to learn and know my ways like people who have lived righteously, and have not abandoned the justice and judgment of the Lord their God."<sup>1</sup>

You will find another kind of persons who are willing to know the way of God and dispose themselves towards it. These hearing in their souls the voice of Christ which says: "turn

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah lviii. 2.

within you, ye who go wandering ; that is not the right path in which you are walking for you cannot go by that to the kingdom of heaven." These turn within themselves, and perceiving that they are lost, leave the road they are pursuing, and before they take any other course pray unto God that he would show them the true way. And the disposal is this. Such persons are presently sensible of Christ, who says to them : "whoever will walk by the true and certain way, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me<sup>1</sup>, imitating me in what he can," and they are sensible that in another place of Scripture he declares this to them : "learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, [and ye shall find rest unto your souls." <sup>2</sup>] And thus they immediately enter by the way of denial of their own will and by the way of patience and true humility.

You will find some other persons who know the way of God and walk by it, some with more and greater fervency than others, yet in a manner that neither the one nor the other go out of the way nor forsake it. They go on

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xi. 29.

well, and these in truth are but few, as you say, Signora, although they are not so few as you think, because their path being spiritual, *f.* 15. they cannot be seen but by spiritual sight, nor are they possibly known except by persons who walk by the same road. These live in continual care not to offend God; and if at times they fall into any mortal sin through weakness, overcome by temptation, they turn immediately to God, confess their offence, and have no need of many preparations for the confession, for as David says, speaking of himself, their sin is ever before their eyes.<sup>1</sup> These very persons have some negligences and defects which are signs that their minds stand not entirely mortified. Indeed their defects and negligences are often made to be the cause of their improvement, because they repent and humble themselves, and thus learn to mistrust themselves and to confide in God. For this reason St. Paul says that all things work together for good to them that love God<sup>2</sup>, and hence he says in another place that there is nothing to bring condemnation to

<sup>1</sup> Ps. li. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 28.



them who having entered upon this road, stand united to Christ Jesus by faith and love.<sup>1</sup>

The first persons are the wicked; the second, the blind; the third, the unsteady; the fourth, the prudent; the fifth, the holy. In this manner you can see that if few persons walk by the Christian way, it is more through their impiety, blindness, and fickleness than through its difficulty; and knowing this, you should have no fear of finding it. And since you, Signora, as I think, are one of the fourth sort of persons, set yourself to listen to the voice of Christ, for he will put you forward by the true way; and consider it certain that directly you shall have entered upon it you will feel no more confusion, inquietude, travail, or perplexity; in short, you will not feel any of those conflicts of mind, but on the contrary you will experience great peace, cheerfulness, satisfaction, and supreme content.

GIULIA. All that you have said satisfies me. And since I absolutely wish to enter upon this way, it remains for you to lead me

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 1.

by the hánd, instructing me in those footsteps by which I believe you have walked.

VALDÉS. I know not what more you wish to learn from me of that which the Preacher tells you every day.

GIULIA. I am weak, and cannot make such resistance to my inclination as the Preacher speaks of.

VALDÉS. I already, in good part, understand you, Signora. What need have you to go by the branches?<sup>1</sup> I know well what you would wish.

GIULIA. What rudeness! Since you know it, why do you not mention it?

VALDÉS. Because I wait that you should ask it with your own lips.

GIULIA. Do me this favour then, since you know it, to mention it; and if you divine it, I will tell you the truth without reserve.

VALDÉS. I am content with this. You, Signora, wish to be freed from the troublesome things that come and go through your

<sup>1</sup> An Italian and Spanish proverb, used by Valdés: *andare per li rami?* Orig. *Dejémonos de andar por las ramas.* *Diálogo de la Lengua*, p. 203, ed. 1860.

imagination, and being convinced that this is the true way to free you from them, you wish me to show you some royal and ladylike road by which you may be able to get to God *f.* 16. without turning away from the world, and by which you can attain to interior humility without showing it outwardly; possess the virtue of patience without the occurrence to you of what would exercise it; despise the world, but in a manner that the world may not condemn you; clothe your soul with Christian virtues without despoiling the body of its accustomed ornaments; nourish your soul with spiritual viands without depriving the body of its usual banquets; you wish to appear good in the sight of God without appearing ill in the eyes of the world; and in short by this path you wish to be able to lead your religious life, but in a mode that no person of the world, even with the great familiarity and intercourse he might have with you, could discover in your life more than he at present knows. Have I divined your sentiments?

GIULIA. Very nearly; or at least if you

have not divined them you can say that you have gone to the turn of the mark.

VALDÉS. This is sufficient for me to warrant my saying, that according to my perception, you are more ready to free yourself from the conflict, than you feel to assent to the verdict.

GIULIA. Yet do you not always tell me that a bad compromise is better than a good verdict?<sup>1</sup>

VALDÉS. Yes, I say so, but not in this case, in which the compromise is very dangerous, and terribly hurtful. Know you not that Christ says, that we cannot serve God and the world; either we must serve the world and despise God, or we must love God and despise the world?<sup>2</sup> And have you not understood what Job says, that the life of man, here in this world, is but a constant warfare? But know that the warfare is between the flesh and the spirit, when the flesh draws us towards the world, and the spirit

<sup>1</sup> Proverb: Mas vale mala avenencia que buena sentencia, used by Valdés in reference to Isabella's suit against Giulia.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. vi. 24.

draws us towards God. And sad for those who do not feel this warfare!

GIULIA. Now then, I well understand and experience both, and I wish that without more laying it upon me, you would decidedly tell me whether your mind is sufficient to put me into a way which leads somewhat to that which you have described, although it be not so loose, for I am not so subjected to my appetites as you must think, according to what you have expressed by your words.

VALDÉS. If I knew, Signora, anything in your manner of life and outward conversation disgraceful or base, or that you had any relic, or any show or appearance of evil, I would freely tell you, that my mind is not sufficient for me to satisfy you in what you desire, because it being necessary in such case that you should depart from all that might be evil, it would be necessary that there should be seen in you a different person from her whom we now see and know. But knowing your way of life and conversation to be so decorous, your manners as regular as can be wished for in such a lady, and seeing that all the re-

formation necessary to you in order to conquer and obtain the end you desire consists in the affections and appetites of the soul, which corrected and reformed, it would be an easy

*f. 17.* thing to reform the exterior <sup>f</sup>in what appears to have need of reformation, I am bold to tell you, my mind is equal to set you in the way you desire, without worldly persons perceiving it in you, in such a manner that if you engage yourself to it, with the grace of God, before many days have passed, you will begin to feel the peace of conscience and the other benefits which spiritual persons enjoy.

GIULIA. If you do this I shall remain for ever obliged to you.

VALDÉS. With the grace of God I will do this now; and I only wish that you should remain obliged to God himself, from whom I wish you to acknowledge every good that comes.

GIULIA. I will endeavour to do what you say. Now do that which belongs to you to do.

VALDÉS. I am content. But first tell me whether you have ever crossed any stream by a ford.

GIULIA Yes, I have, many times.

VALDÉS. And have you considered how that, by looking upon the water, it seemed as though your head swam, so that if you had not assisted yourself, either by closing your eyes, or by fixing them on the opposite shore, you would have fallen into the water in great danger of drowning?

GIULIA. Yes, I have noticed it.

VALDÉS. And have you seen how by keeping always for your object the view of the land that lies on the other side, you have not felt the swimming of the head, and so have suffered no danger of drowning?

GIULIA. I have noticed this too.

VALDÉS. Then if you, Signora, wish to cross the running flood of the things of this world, do in the same manner. Look not upon them with your affections, so that such danger may not happen to you as befalls them who, gazing on the stream, fall into it and are drowned. And endeavour to keep the view of your soul, fixed and nailed with Christ, on the cross. And if at any time, through want of care, you set your eyes upon the things of

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the world, in such a manner that you feel your heart incline to them, turn back upon yourself, and return to fix your view upon Christ crucified, and in this way your course will go on well. And therefore I wish you, Signora, to take above all things, for your principal purpose, to enamour yourself with Christ, regulating all your works, all your words, all your thoughts by that divine command which says: "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself."<sup>1</sup> And I say, hold fast this command as your principal rule, for Christian perfection consists in loving God above all things and your neighbour as yourself.

GIULIA. I marvel at what you say, because I have all my life been told that friars and nuns are in the rule of perfection by the vows that they make, if they observe them.

VALDÉS. Let them say so, Signora, and give credit to me that, whether friars or non-friars, they possess so much of Christian per-

<sup>1</sup> Luke x. 27.



fection as they have of faith and love of God, and not a grain more.

GIULIA. It would much please me if you f. 18. could make me comprehend this.

VALDÉS. I will do it very willingly. You must know, Signora, that the human heart is naturally inclined to love; in such way, it must either love God and all things for God, or it must love itself and all things for itself. That which loves itself does all things for itself. I mean to say that it is so far moved to them as its own self-interest invites it, and thus if it love anything beyond itself, it loves it for itself and for its own interest, and if it have any love towards God, it has it for its own interest and in no other respect. Such a one, friar or non-friar, because he has his affection in a state of disorder, having placed it in himself, never knows how, or in what manner, he ought to love created things. Rather when he desires to dispose himself to love God, because he does not conceive how to go out of himself, he never discovers the way, and therefore goes continually wandering in mere appearances, and thus being always confused and

variable in his affections, bad or good, he lives much out of the life of Christian perfection; and so much the more will he live further from it as the more he becomes enamoured of himself, although he may be very perfect in outward observances; because God requires the heart.

He who loves God performs everything he does for him. I would say that he is moved to this by the love he bears to God, and this he does with as much warmth and earnestness as the degree of affection moves or incites him. And thus if he love anything beside God, he loves it for the sake of God, and because God wills it so, and he likewise loves himself, because he knows that God wills that he be loved. Such a one, friar or non-friar, because he has his love ordered in God, takes hence the mode and manner how he should love all created things, and is most regulated and ordered in his love, and loves nothing inordinately. And now his good works please and are grateful before God, because he is moved to work by the impulse of love, because as God is love, so no work is grateful to him that

is not done by love. Agreeable to this is what St. Augustine says: "good works follow them who are already justified, and do not go before in him who has to be justified." I mean to say that works are good when done by a person already justified, and none can be justified unless he stand in love and charity with God and his neighbour. In such manner a person will be more perfect, the more he continues fervent in this love. You can confirm this truth yourself by considering how you estimate what a person does in your affairs when you know that he is not moved to do it by the affection he bears towards you, but by some other design of his own. But since you wish one not born under the obligation to love you, to serve you for love, as all of us are born to love God, think whether God would at least require from us the same that you wish; how much more *f* from those persons who are regenerate and born again in Christ, by the new, spiritual regeneration through faith and baptism; because such of us have a fresh obligation to love God. Speak I of one obligation? rather should I say infinite

obligations, since we see that he loved us infinitely, and Christ loves us, and by infinite modes and ways he sought, and still seeks, to bring us to himself and to unite us with himself through grace and love. Reflecting on this, I am sure you will make yourself capable of this truth, that Christian perfection consists in loving God, and that each one will be so much more perfect as he shall so much the more love God, whether he make monastic vows, or whether he make them not, provided only, that he keep the vow that he made in baptism by which we are Christians.

GIULIA. I rest satisfied now with what you have said of perfection, in such a degree that I already know from your argument what I had not known until now. And since you wish me to take for my chief purpose the love of God and of my neighbour in order to become a perfect Christian, and I determine to do so, it will be well, if you please, to mention some rules by which I may know and understand what it is I ought to do, and how I must conduct myself not to swerve from the love of God and of my neighbour ; because I wish

absolutely to give myself up to be enamoured with God, so much so as may deprive myself of your favour, and the favour of a hundred others like you.

VALDÉS. Be deprived of favour! No! Learn rather, Signora, that in this divine love there is no jealousy, because it is communicable from itself. And it is thus, that so much the more you love God, so much more you will rejoice that God loves others of us, and that God should be loved by others of us. But leaving this, until you learn it in time by experience, I say, Signora, that there are no better rules for this that you ask, than those God has given to us in his most perfect law, which we understand not like the Jews, but as Christians, in the form and manner in which Christ declared it. It teaches us what we ought to do in order not to swerve from the love of God and of our neighbour.

GIULIA. If it be not troublesome to you, since you say that the rules of the law of God are right for what I desire, it will be well that you should briefly describe the way in which you understand them.

VALDÉS. I will do so very willingly, because I know this is the entrance to lead and conduct you in the way I have pointed out. But as I desire that my words should not generate scruples in your conscience, I wish to apprise you first of this, that I will explain to you the law of God, not in a manner that you are obliged to observe it under pain of mortal sin, but in the way that all those persons should understand it who desire to become so much masters of their own affections and appetites as that they may in all things be obedient to the Spirit. For thus, as he goes in peril of poison who carries a viper or scorpion in his bosom, so he goes in danger  
*f. 20.* of mortal sin who bears about his affections and appetites active and entire.

GIULIA. You have found out the scruples. Take no further care, but begin to tell me, for I shall remain so attentive that perhaps I shall not lose a single word.

VALDÉS. You ought to do so. You will take for the *first rule* to make God in such a manner absolute lord of your heart that you do not hope or confide in any created thing,

nor love or fear, except God alone. In a manner that then you may be able to count that you keep your heart ordered conformably to this rule, when, despoiled of all mere human affections, you shall feel within you that neither prosperity will elevate you, nor adversity depress you, honours will not make you proud, nor injuries abase you, and with all this you shall continue to believe in Christ, hope in Christ, love Christ, and live safely and contentedly with Christ, embracing the cross of Christ, and taking it as sweet to suffer with Christ, having in abhorrence the glory of the world, and holding the pleasures of the world as bitter.

And since it is not enough that the heart be kept in this manner if the lips do not conform to it, it is proper that you take as a rein to them the *second rule*, and this will be that you continually praise, magnify, invoke and bless the name of God, slighting and holding in little consideration your own name and glory, in such manner that all the honour and glory may be attributed to the omnipotent God, to whom your words go always

directed. And because the divine Majesty is much offended by our oaths, we should ever hold in remembrance those words of Christ, where, after he has reminded us that we should by no means swear at all, he says: "let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay;"<sup>1</sup> meaning to say, that when we would affirm a thing, we should assert it with a simple YES; and when we would deny a thing, we should deny it by the like simple NO. Because when more than this is said, it is a sign that the heart is not well ordered.

Again, since God is not satisfied without being absolute lord of our hearts and of our lips, but wishes to govern our actions, take for the *third rule* to make an offering to God of your whole will, referring it in all and for all to his divine Majesty, in such mode that he may regulate it and govern it without your putting into your concerns anything of your own. And this remitting of yourself to the divine will, you should know, Signora, is the celebrating of the Christian sabbath, for by bodily rest is understood the spiritual rest, and by

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 33-37.



servile labours are understood the works of sin. St. Paul entreats us to make this offering, saying: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,"<sup>1</sup> in a manner that you entirely offer to him all your will, all your understanding, all your memory. And I entreat you also, that you *f.* 21. do not conform your conduct to the conduct of persons of the world, and that you be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may know and understand the will of God.<sup>2</sup>

See here, Signora, three rules according to the three commandments of the law of God, which are so spiritual that while you observe them, you may be certain that you truly love God in the manner he desires to be loved. And consider that you will be so much nearer, or farther from this love, as you feel your affections and appetites remain nearer, or farther from conformity with these three rules, which I entreat you to print on your memory. And though it will indeed be, that while you live in

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xii. 2.

conformity with these rules, living with love to God you will live in love to your neighbour, it may therefore seem in a manner superfluous to give you any rule for this, yet considering that God, to assist our weakness, has also given us rules by which we may live in love towards our neighbour, I am willing to repeat them. And so you will take those already given, as well as these now mentioned, as rules of God and not mine.

The *first rule* will be, such being the will of God, that with inward obedience you obey and be submissive to your parents, to your seniors, to your superiors in whatever pre-eminence or authority they may be, not opposing them, nor murmuring at them. And observe, Signora, that you do not think to satisfy yourself with exterior observance, because God is not satisfied that his commands be kept only in appearance, but he chiefly desires the heart.

And because the worldly things most corrupting to Christian charity are strifes, hatred, and enmities, from which proceed homicides, I wish you to take for the *second rule*, that you make your mind patient, quiet, pacific,

humane, compassionate, all feelings of hatred, anger, and retaliation being eradicated and banished. Doing this, you will live conformably with that doctrine of Jesus Christ which in short says, that we should not be angry against our neighbour, nor scorn him by outward signs, nor revile him with injurious words. And consider, that you cannot do this, unless you have first composed your mind in the manner I have told you. And that you may conceive the great importance of this, consider what St. John says: "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer."<sup>1</sup>

In this way, although you are not homicidal, it is enough if there move in you the feelings of wrath, retaliation, rancour, and ill-will. Begin, then, Signora, henceforward to make this self-denial, for the sooner you begin it the sooner you will come out of it, and pass on to the *third rule*. This will be, that you endeavour, as much as possible, to hold all your *s.* 22. outward senses subjected, in such manner, that nothing rude or disreputable may ever pass through them to the mind. For God

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iii. 15.

desires that your actions, your words, and your thoughts may be chaste and modest. And in order to be able to fulfil this, it is proper that you keep your feelings so subdued as I have said. It is proper also that you be temperate in eating, in drinking, and sleeping, in intercourse with worldly persons, and in short in all those things that can generate in your mind any unlawful desire. Know surely that as well to preserve your mind pure and spotless, as also not to offend Christian charity, it is necessary that all the sensual appetites, from which spring many hindrances to the love of our neighbour, should die out. Therefore Christ, closing the entrance of such thoughts to us, says: "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."<sup>1</sup> So that he who wishes not to sin desires the affections and appetites towards sinful things within him to die out.

Another rule is, because this *mine* and *thine* are mortal enemies of Christian charity, God provides us a healthy, wise, and necessary doctrine, which you may take for the *fourth*

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 28.

*rule.* This is, that you subdue in your heart all desire and appetite for those things which people of the world call good, in such degree, that not putting any happiness in them, you do not even wish for what you have not; and that you possess those things you have, not as owner, but as a trustee, so that if you were wronged you would not be so disturbed as that you should come to feel ill-will towards the person, or those persons, who took them from you. Then, having your mind so well ordered, you will willingly do what Christ says, whether as to leaving the cloak to him who would bring you into litigation for the gown (*gonnella*), or as to giving up your property to them who demand it.<sup>1</sup> This is Christian liberality, and this is the true poverty so much praised and commended in the holy Scriptures. And I certainly believe that David for this calls them poor who so serve and obey God. And most surely hold that this is the true way to root out and expel cursed avarice, which is so intimate an evil that they are little aware of it who are most

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 40-42.

addicted to it. But ask St. Paul the inconveniences that follow from it, and he will tell you that covetousness is idolatry.<sup>1</sup>

Thus as God wishes us not to offend divine love by the lips, he lays down the second rule which I have mentioned, speaking of the care you ought to take for the love of God, so also for the care of the love of our neighbour, he lays down a rule over the tongue, and this will be the *fifth rule*. This is, that you keep the tongue well ruled and governed, and only use it for the glory of God, and for the religious  
*f. 23* or 'physical good of your neighbour and your own, taking away and removing from you every occasion that may lead or induce you to let anything escape from your lips that offends, or may offend, the most lowly or abject individual of all who are found in the world. And that you may see how important this is, I wish you to know that St. James says: "if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man."<sup>2</sup> And notice, Signora, that I do not tell you that, in order to keep the commandment of love towards his neighbour per-

<sup>1</sup> Col. iii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> James iii. 2.

fectly, a person must do all these things precisely, for I do not say so; but that a person, who wishes to be perfect, must keep all his affections so obedient and well regulated that when it may be needful for the honour of God to do so, he will not find in himself a repugnance to them.

In conclusion, I may say that you ought to compose your mind in conformity with these five rules which you have heard, if you wish to attain to the love of your neighbour perfectly, and maintain yourself in it, which Christ comprises in a *single rule*, saying : "Do unto others what you wish others should do unto you."<sup>1</sup> And it is so, that there is no person in the world who is not pleased by being obeyed by them who ought to obey him; nor is there an individual who is not pleased to preserve his life, or not to have ill-will or hatred from another; nor any who are not pleased that people entertain no ill thought of their wife, children, sisters or relatives, especially as to disreputable deeds; nor is there any one who is not pleased to be assisted and succoured in his necessities

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vii. 12.

and who, if he have property, does not endeavour not to be wronged, or encroached upon ; and finally, there is no one who is not pleased when everybody speaks well of him, and who is not grieved by the contrary. So that doing to our neighbour all that would please us that he should do towards ourselves, we should accomplish the law of God, since we keep ourselves in accordance with them in love and charity. And on this, as Christ says, hang all the law and the prophets.<sup>1</sup> To this you can resolve all that is written in the sacred Scriptures.

GIULIA. You have kept me so much surprised after you began to enter into these rules, considering what perfection is necessary in order to live in conformity with them, that I have been unwilling to reply to anything that you have said. But now that you have finished, I wish you to tell me whether all those persons are condemned who do not live with the purity, sincerity, and circumspection that you have described in these rules.

VALDÉS. St. John, in one of his epistles,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxii. 40.



says : "My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And, if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he is the propitiation for our sins."<sup>1</sup> This same I say to you, Signora, that I set before you this perfection, in order that labouring and *f.* 24. attaining to live conformably to it, you may never sin. But should you commit sin, I wish you to remember that Jesus Christ is your advocate before his Eternal Father, who satisfied for our sins and for the sins of the whole world. So you may not think that the persons will therefore be condemned, who have not so mortified their appetites as I say that I wish you to hold yours, according to these rules that I have shown you. Yet I wish you to know, that those persons who, not arriving at this perfection, but having opened their eyes, and known their evil way and discovered the way which Christ teaches, according to what I have here told you, if they would be saved, endeavour and strive to walk in this path, truly, as far as

<sup>1</sup> 1 John ii. 1, 2.

human weakness allows, mortifying the Old man, and renewing the New, whilst they do not arrive at perfection, they confess in the sorrow of their soul that they are not what God would wish them to be. Having this lively conviction, they use most affectingly the expression of the Lord's prayer: "forgive us our debts," and those of David: "Create in me a clean heart, O God! and blot out my transgressions; therefore I acknowledge my iniquity, and my sin is ever before me."<sup>1</sup> If all who walk by the Christian way would always thus perfectly live as we have said, St. John would not have said: that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us<sup>2</sup>; and a just man falleth seven times and riseth up again.<sup>3</sup> And know, Signora, that he is a just man because he goes by the way of justification (*giustitia*), which is that which Christ taught us. He who falls through weakness, and turns to arise again through the faith and trust that he has in Jesus Christ, will be forgiven: and these are the infirmities which St. Paul means,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. li. 3, 10.    <sup>2</sup> 1 John i. 8.    <sup>3</sup> Prov. xxiv. 16.

when, speaking of Christ, he says : that we have a high priest who can have compassion on our infirmities, having been himself clothed with the garment of humanity.<sup>1</sup> The whole affair consists in leaving at once the way of the world, and entering upon the way of God, and after having entered upon it, falling and rising, stumbling and not falling, everything goes well for us. Hence fear not the purity of this Christian perfection. And so I entreat you rather that you may enamour yourself of it, for I warrant you, that you would never have understood it, if God had not first internally taught it to you. And because he gives you to understand it, proper it is that you should dispose yourself to experience it.

GIULIA. I would wish this ; that you would let me comprehend, for what purpose God sets before us a rule so painful to observe, that we have always to confess ourselves his debtors ; for it has in appearance an odour, I know not how, of tyranny.

VALDÉS. Rather know, Signora, that God has shown the love he bears towards us as

<sup>1</sup> Heb. iv. 15.

well in this as in all the rest he has done for  
*f. 25.* us ; for so arrogant is the human mind, that  
unless it were acknowledged debtor to fulfil  
the whole law, it would not consider itself as a  
sinner; and unless it considered itself a sinner,  
it would not fear the judgment of God; and  
unless it feared this, it would not humble it-  
self; and unless it were humbled it would not  
gain the grace of God; and without his grace it  
could not become justified before Him, and  
if not justified, then not saved. Now think  
whether this singular blessing of God may not  
be as good as all the others! And know,  
Signora, that so much as a person in this pre-  
sent life will be more perfect, and will stand  
more united to God in love and charity, so  
much the more will he humble himself be-  
fore God, as more knowing his imperfection  
and the necessity he has that God would con-  
tinually pardon him his faults, and purify and  
accept his actions. Therefore David calls, not  
those persons who never sinned, blessed, for  
all have sinned ; but he calls them blessed  
to whom God pardons the sins they commit.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxxii. 2.

Do you rest satisfied with this explanation?

GIULIA. Yes, I rest satisfied, you can now proceed further.

VALDÉS. I wish you now to consider that in this present life we sin in three ways, through evil design, through ignorance, and through weakness. They sin by evil design who neither know the way of God, nor wish to know it. According to St. Paul, the sin of these is punished by blindness and obstinacy in sin.<sup>1</sup> God pronounces a similar sentence by Jeremiah. These with difficulty raise themselves, as Jeremiah says. Through ignorance they sin, who, not caring to discover the way of the Lord, depart from Him.<sup>2</sup> He is ready to pardon these, according to St. Paul, for so he says, that because he sinned through ignorance in persecuting the Christians, God had mercy on him. They sin through weakness, who having entered upon the way of God, wish in no manner to offend his divine Majesty, but at times fall, overcome by temptation. David was one of these, and one of such was Peter,

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. v. 4.

when he denied Christ. The sin of such as these God pardons more readily than any others, because as soon as they know it, they speedily humble themselves and thus quickly regain the grace of God. It even frequently happens that, humbled by the sin, they walk more resolutely on the Christian way. Thus David shows it occurred so with him, saying: "Good for me was it that thou humbledest me, that so I might learn thy forgiveness."<sup>1</sup> I have wished to tell you this because you raise in your conscience all sorts of scruples, which are commonly born of self-love, and slight knowledge of God, being certain that walking by this Christian way you will not sin, except through weakness. God will quickly forgive you for this in which you so offend, by the humility with which you will ask his pardon, and through the faith and

*f.* 26. trust that you will maintain in Jesus Christ.

GIULIA. You have entirely given me life by this, for you had kept me greatly terrified.

VALDÉS. If you wish to banish all fear from your soul, love Christ, Signora, for no

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxix. 71.

fear can ever dwell in the soul which sets its view with a lively and efficacious sentiment on Christ crucified, considering with entire faith that Christ made atonement and payment for it. Now I say, Signora, in conclusion, that these rules will lead you to the love of God and of your neighbour, and will preserve you in both. And then you will know by experience the fruits of charity, according as St. Paul describes them, saying: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."<sup>1</sup> You will also know, that which St. John says: that perfect love casteth out all fear from the conscience.<sup>2</sup> For they who truly love have no fear.

GIULIA. I am already satisfied with what refers to charity. May it please God to make me feel and relish it in my soul as well as you

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 4-7.

<sup>2</sup> 1 John iv. 18.

have made it penetrate my understanding. But because at times I have heard you say that charity is the fruit of faith, I wish you to tell me something relating to faith.

VALDÉS. It is true, as you say, that I have told you that charity is the fruit of faith. And do you know why I said so? Because I am sure that where lively faith is, there is charity. And know, Signora, that, as fire cannot fail to warm, so a lively faith cannot fail to work deeds of charity, and you must imagine that faith is like a tree, and charity is the fruit of the tree; as the tree when it is dried up yields no fruit, so faith wanting in the heart of a person, there is no charity. And notice, Signora, that when I speak of faith, I do not understand by faith a mere historical belief of the history of Christ, for this can well exist without charity, and, therefore, St. James calls the faith bad Christians have, a dead faith, such as the evil spirits of hell have.<sup>1</sup> But understand that when I say faith I mean to speak of that faith which is alive in the soul, acquired not by industry, nor human contri-

<sup>1</sup> James ii. 17-19.



vance, but by means of the grace of God communicated with supernatural Light. This faith gives credit to all the words of God, as well to his threatenings as to his promises, so that when it hears said what Christ said: that he who will believe and is baptized shall be saved, and that he who will not believe shall be condemned; giving such credit to these words as holding them for a certainty, it has not the least doubt of salvation.

GIULIA. In this we so well agree, both you and I; because in believing, no one shall be before me.

VALDÉS. Do not presume, Signora, that you believe, for very spiritual must he be *f. 27.* who would have a faith so lively as to be fit to be justified by it. Rather know that you are weak in the faith, and call upon Christ with the Apostles: "Lord, increase my faith!" and say with the lunatic's father: "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief!"<sup>1</sup> and in this manner you will gain more than by persuading yourself that you believe. It is a great thing, Signora, to obtain from our

<sup>1</sup> Mark ix. 24.

souls that they entirely confide in God. You will see it by this: that if you are asked whether you believe the articles of the faith, one by one, you will answer yes; but if inadvertently, on your coming to confession, they should ask you whether you believe that God has pardoned all your sins, you will say, you think so, but that you are not certain. Now know that this uncertainty arises from want of faith, because if you entirely relied upon the words of Christ, who says to the priests<sup>1</sup> that whatsoever they shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever they shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; and if you shall truly believe that which you confess in the Creed when you say that you believe the remission of sins, you will not hesitate to say with a full voice, feeling grief in your soul for the offence done to God, and having confessed it, that you hold it certain that God has pardoned all your sins. Do you wish to see clearly and manifestly how you do not entirely confide in God? Tell me with what thing you would rest most

<sup>1</sup> He said this to his *Apostles*, Matt. xviii. 18; John xx. 23,

without care and be most at ease with, and in what you would most confide to assure yourself that you have this year wherewith to live upon; whether with a good sum of money that you have in a bank, or in that which Christ promises to them who seek the kingdom of God, when he says to them: "Take no thought, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? Since God takes thought for you; seek first the kingdom of God, and God himself will provide for you all these things?"<sup>1</sup>

GIULIA. There is no doubt but that I should have most confidence in the money in the bank. But if I knew myself so perfect as to merit that God should take thought of me, perhaps I should then trust more in the words of Christ.

VALDÉS. Rather it is the contrary. The more perfect you might be, so much the want of merit would you find in yourself. And it is thus, that he who stands nearest to the grace of God, stands farthest from thinking that he merits it. And for this reason

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi. 31-33.

St. Paul said that by the grace of God he was what he was; not attributing anything to his own merit.<sup>1</sup> So that, Signora, if you have little confidence in the words of Christ, it is not because of what you say, but through not giving credence to them; and this is the greatest injury you can do towards God.

GIULIA. You are too sharp with me. You will soon make me to believe that I have not faith.

f. 28. VALDÉS. I do not wish you to believe that you have it not, but I wish you to think that what you have is a dead faith; and I wish you to pray very urgently to God, that he would quicken it and make you strong in that faith, for according to St. Paul: without faith no one can please God<sup>2</sup>; and if you are willing to notice this, you will find that in nothing can your friend offend you so much as by not giving credence to your word; and on the contrary, nothing can do you greater service, or give you more pleasure, than by his giving entire faith to whatever you shall say to him.

GIULIA. In this you so rightly speak the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xi. 6.

truth, that it extremely grieves me when I am not believed, and I am greatly pleased when others give me credence.

VALDÉS. Since you know this of yourself, you ought at least to think the same of God. And thinking so, you should labour to confine and subject your intellect to the obedience of faith; thus you would learn to confide in God and to give entire faith to his words, as much so when he threatens, as when he promises. Not to dwell much upon this, I may say, that if we put all our confidence entirely in Christ, giving entire faith to all his promises, we shall not depend upon, nor be so bound to created things, in which we put more confidence than we do in Christ, since we are carnal and we judge of things only so far as the outward sense represents them to us, and so we make no count of the interior. I could well tell marvellous things if I wished to begin to praise faith to you, but this is enough to know, that you will be so far a Christian as you shall know that you confide in Christ; it being thus: that to be a Christian person, is to be justified; and no one can be

justified except by faith, because the just live by faith.<sup>1</sup>

GIULIA. Never have I been able to comprehend conclusively what difference there is between faith and hope; and it would gratify me to know from you, in what manner you make them to differ.

VALDÉS. I do not wonder that you do not understand this, because the same thing occurs to many learned persons. Know then that faith is exercised in the things of the present life, hope in those of the life eternal. This you should understand in this way. You wish to go from the Mole to the Isle of Capri, but you know not how. I come to you, and say, "trust yourself to me, Signora; for I will lead you on foot by the hand without your being drowned in the passage, and when crossed over I will place you in that spot of the island where you desire to be." You, although it appears to you a thing beyond all reason, give credence to my words, and confiding in them, you take my hand and walk through the water. See here, faith carries

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 17.

you, and you are at the same time borne up by the expectation of enjoying the satisfaction you have said you should feel when you should find yourself upon the island. Do you now comprehend the difference?

GIULIA. Yes, very well.

VALDÉS. Now, turning to our subject, I wish, Signora, that you set before the view of your soul the idea of Christian perfection, according to what we have discoursed, and that you set yourself to be enamoured of it, *f.* 29. and when enamoured of it, you will not satisfy yourself until you have reached very near to it; and consider that you will then be near it when you shall know in truth that your heart is not inclined to love anything out of God, nor your tongue taste sweetness in naming any other name than that of God, and this only when naming it for his glory. And when you shall feel that you are not inclined to perform anything that may not be conformable to the will of God; and when you shall find your mind most obedient and submissive to your superiors, and far removed from all ire and all revenge and rancour,

F

filled with peace and humility; and as far removed from all sensual vice that you will not find in it a thought that is not chaste; and so poor in spirit, that you would incline your desire to nothing more than to preserve what it has; and so fervent in love towards your neighbour that you not only never speak to his prejudice, but if you hear others speak so, you excuse and exculpate him as much as possible: by all this I wish to say, that when you shall feel yourself as dead to the outward affections and appetites as to the interior, that neither the estimation of the world exalts you nor its dishonour abases you, that neither anger overrules you nor envy molests, nor less the flesh disturbs you;—then well and truly may you believe that you are indeed near to Christian perfection. I say not that you should imagine you are not in a good state, when you are not so much advanced in Christian perfection as I have said; but I say that until you feel and know this perfection within, such as I have depicted it, you should not fail to entreat God continually that he would increase it in you, although



you should come to perform miracles; and on the other side, until you should feel yourself very strong and firm in this Christian perfection, I would not wish that you should think you had gained anything. This is the perfection to which Christ invites us when he says: "be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."<sup>1</sup> St. Paul invites us to the same, saying to us: "be ye therefore followers of God as dear children:"<sup>2</sup> and in another place saying: "follow me as I have followed Christ."<sup>3</sup> To the same I invite you, and to the same I desire you to ask me to come by words and by works.

GIULIA. O my God, what would I pay to see a Christian so perfect as the one you have here pictured! for me, I would strip myself of all that I have.

VALDÉS. And would it not be still better to see yourself as perfect a Christian as I have here described?

GIULIA. Yes, but this is impossible!

VALDÉS. How impossible? Do you not know what Christ says: that all things are

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. v. 1.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 1.

possible to him who attains, as it were naturally, to put his whole confidence in God? <sup>1</sup>

GIULIA. I have indeed heard say so, but I am weak.

VALDÉS. And yet so much the more you are weak so much greater will be the grace of God which will make you strong; if then you confess in sincerity that you are weak,  
*f. 30.* and trust in Christ, he will strengthen you. Do you not know what the Gospel says, that the things that are impossible with men are possible with God? <sup>2</sup>

GIULIA. I desire it so much that I dare not expect it.

VALDÉS. Now if you wish it, ask it of God, and entreating him for it, as St. James says, confidently, he will give it you <sup>3</sup>, and I promise you that it will not be wanting to you. A grand thing this, that persons wish to be believed in their promises, being naturally fickle, and, as David calls them, liars, and that they are not willing to give credence, nor trust themselves to the promises of God! I truly believe that this may be the greatest

<sup>1</sup> Mark ix. 23.    <sup>2</sup> Luke xviii. 27.    <sup>3</sup> James i. 5.

injury that a person can do to the divine Majesty, so also to believe and trust in his promises is the most grateful sacrifice that can be made to him.

GIULIA. I do not care to detain you longer upon this point, unless you begin to guide me in this way of Christian perfection; since you already keep me so enamoured of it, that it seems as though I could not live content until I unite with it, if not entirely, at least in such a degree as may be needful to me, that my concerns may become accepted in the sight of God. But it is understood that you always have regard to lead me so privately that no person be sensible of me, because, if I can be excused, I wish not to give occasion for talk among the people.

VALDÉS. I will do what you say; but notice, Signora, that again I wish you to promise me to govern yourself by what I shall say to you, because I shall not be willing to have lost my time, and that you should remain the same individual as before.

GIULIA. Trust me; and I promise you that, with the grace of God, before many

days you will' see the effect of your words upon me.

VALDÉS. With this confidence I shall recover heart to disclose to you what I know and have been able to understand of this way of Christian perfection. And before I begin to show you the stages by which you must walk, I wish you to know this: that St. Paul, in many places of his epistles, divides man into two parts, one he calls the flesh, and the other the spirit; one the Old man, the other the New man. And know that by the Old man he means man unquickened by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and by the New man he means man already made alive by the grace of the Holy Spirit. The Old man he calls the flesh; and he calls it the body subject to sin. Whence it appears that under the title of flesh he means the whole man, soul and body, without the Holy Spirit, and nature without grace. The same is proved by what he says in another part, that the flesh strives against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, in which conflict, if the soul yields itself to be overcome by the flesh, and with it mingling, it becomes

altogether carnal; and if it yield itself to be persuaded by the spirit, conjoining with the spirit, it becomes wholly spiritual. St. Paul, therefore, almost always divides man into *f.* 31. two parts, I say almost always, because in one or two places he appears to divide him into three, that is, into spirit, soul, and body. You have already understood what is the Old man, flesh and body subject to sin; and what is the New man, soul and spirit; therefore mind well which of these lives in you, because thus the wound better known, you may be able to apply the medicine. Know also, according to St. Paul, the appetites and affections of the flesh are death, and are enemies to God, because they are neither willing, nor do indeed become subject to the law of God.<sup>1</sup> Know further, that the outward fruits of the flesh are homicides, wrongs, fleshly lusts; and the internal are ambition, avarice, envy, wrath, revenge. Know, too, that according to the same St. Paul, the effects of the spirit are life and peace; he would say, that by means of the spirit the soul lives, and

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 7.

the conscience remains peaceful and at rest. Know yet more that the fruits of the spirit are charity, cheerfulness, sincerity, peace, benignity, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. So that one and the same person is, according to nature, the Old man; and according to grace, the New man. The Old man does not join to the things that are from the Spirit of God, rather, blinded by his human reason, he considers them as vain and uncertain. The New man judges all things, and cannot be judged of any. From all this that is said, you can gather, Signora, that your soul stands in one of these three states; either it has mingled with the flesh and become carnal, or it is united with the Spirit and become spiritual; or it is now in the battle, the flesh wishing it for itself, and the Spirit inviting it to itself. And it is proper that you make this examination, because if your soul is found with the flesh, you should commend yourself to God, and by these rules give favour to the Spirit, for thus it begins to combat and come forth with the victory; and if you find it joined with the Spirit, endeavour with constant prayer to preserve

it so; and if you find it undetermined, use force to yourself, that it may very, very soon be determined to be embraced and united with the Spirit, so that you may thus become wholly spiritual, and recover that *image* and *likeness* of God, to which it was created. And reflect, Signora, that it is impossible that you are not in one of these three states, for thinking on this I am sure that you will very closely examine what is that state in which you are.

GIULIA. I have already well examined it, and I know it much more clearly by what you have said. Make account that I am in the worst state, and conform your language to this presumption.

VALDÉS. Since so it is, commending you with heartfelt affection to God, for his help in this work, with all your mind be very attentive.

GIULIA. Leave that to my care.

VALDÉS. The *first step* you have to take in this way is in truth to know, that until this time you have been going out of the way, although you thought you were going by the *f. 32.* right way. And because I am sure that you have amply known this from the Preacher's

sermons, I do not care to detain myself in explaining it to you.

GIULIA. You do right. Because although the Preacher may not have shown it to me, yet I have well understood it from what you have often said.

VALDÉS. This is well, and since you know that you are out of the way, the *second step* will be to apply your will to resolve to walk by this way, that the Preacher has discovered to you, and which I think more particularly to show to you. And I likewise think certainly that you are already taking this step, for the Preacher's sermons must have set and disposed your soul in a manner that you know what it is that concerns you, and indeed, you desire already to walk by the direct way.

GIULIA. So much so, I promise you, that I desire it more than you think.

VALDÉS. Consider this desire, Signora, as the gift of God. Now because it is not enough to have a thing in the will, unless we design to put it in practice, the *third step* is that you not only resolve to leave the way by which it appeared to you that you were walking to



Christ, but now to take this, by which without any failure you will find Christ. And, consider, that when you have made these three steps, they will have wrought in you the effect of these words with which first John the Baptist, and afterwards Christ, began their preaching, saying: *Pœnitentiam agite, appropinquavit enim regnum cœlorum*; that is, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand;"<sup>1</sup> as though they had said: "Turn within you, ye who go wandering, turn to the good way, be aware that the kingdom of heaven is nigh."

GIULIA. As soon as I knew that the course I held was not good, I desired to find the right way, and proposed within myself to walk by that, if God would give me grace to find it.

VALDÉS. Since you cannot walk by this way without the favour and grace of God, and these God gives not, except to them who leave sin, and who leave being employed in things that may lead to sin, and in curious arts, the *fourth step* is that you prepare the soul to celebrate the Christian Sabbath. I mean to say that you cease from sin; and it does not

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iii. 2.

satisfy me that you may have no outward sin, because I wish that you begin to withdraw from those within, since you know that they are those that deprive you of the grace of God. And I wish you to leave off inquiring into things curious or vain, and that you strictly separate from you all that company and conversation which tends to remove from God, and to draw away your mind, and from which nothing useful can follow for the end that you undertake, that of living unto Christ and not to the world. I greatly desire that God would move your mind with that large impulse of  
f. 33. spirit which he put into those of Ephesus, who hearing the preaching of Paul were converted to Christ, and brought the books in which they learned and exercised their curious arts, and burned them in the presence of all who were there assembled.<sup>1</sup>

But if you do not find in yourself this earnestness of spirit, I shall be satisfied, for the present, if you lay aside all such curious books in a corner, for I let you know that they are a very great hindrance to one beginning to

<sup>1</sup> Acts xix. 19.

walk in this way. And you see already that you can put away all these impediments without exciting outward notice.

GIULIA. I see clearly that it is useful for me to do so, but I do not see how it can be done without evident appearance.

VALDÉS. How not? Is not your mind capable to direct yourself so discreetly that leaving these things you do not show that you leave them?

GIULIA. Go on, and in this thing I will act as you advise me, which I can do because I wish in this to be governed more by your discretion than by my own.

VALDÉS. This is sufficient for me. Now since it is not enough to leave the evil unless you apply yourself to the good, it is necessary that from this day forward you take some portion of the time you lost in these curious things, to enter deeply into a knowledge of the world.

And this will be the *fifth step*. You will know the world to be false, for there is nothing in it that has not more show than substance; a deceiver, because it never fulfils

what it promises, for all its foundation is laid upon things fallen and passing away ; an enemy of God, because it is always trying to divert us from the way of truth, and lead us into that of falsehood and lying ; inconstant, never persevering in the same opinion. In short, recall to your memory that beautiful tragedy that you heard the Preacher relate, by which he showed that people in this world are no other than actors of a tragedy<sup>1</sup>, it being that our existence has no more certainty than theirs, nor is one dissimilar from the other, except that the actors' continues some hours, and ours some years. You will go on in this knowledge every day, for so much as the more you know the world in this way, so much the more will you abhor it.

And this abhorrence will be the *sixth step*.

<sup>1</sup> This figure is used by Chrysostom, probably after one of the Greek poets (S. Chrysost. Homil. in 1 ad Timoth. p. 314); more than a thousand years later it was used by the evangelical Preacher Ochino, at Naples, to instruct his audience; it was reproduced here by Valdés, and, after another century and a half, made current English in the well-known words of Shakspeare :

" All the world 's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players," &c.

I wish to say, that your motive for knowing the world may not be to settle you there, but, by passing through it, to abhor the world. This will help you to lose the relish of worldly things. Such are honours, dignities, stations, lordships and riches, all which things by this consideration you will cease to value, and hold them as little, desirous to win Christ and live with Christ from the example of St. Paul, who counted all these things as dung and dross, having fixed his whole purpose to win Christ.<sup>1</sup> And thus St. Paul himself enjoins us: "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."<sup>2</sup> Then having knowledge of the world, you must abhor it. Or, to speak more correctly, when you have entered a little into a knowledge of the world and of its abominations, you will take a little more time to enter into a knowledge of yourself, and this will be the *seventh step*.

O Signora! of what consequence it is that a person should know how to have acquaint-

<sup>1</sup> Phil. iii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xii. 2.

ance with himself. I am sure that if we truly knew it, we should apply much more study and diligence to this than to any other object whatever.

GIULIA. In what does this importance consist?

VALDÉS. In this, that if you do not know yourself, you can never cease to love yourself inordinately. And while you have this self-love you cannot love God. And whilst you do not love him you cannot do, say, or think anything that may be to his honour; and not being to his honour, consider whether it would be to the service of your soul.

GIULIA. So might I know others as fully as I know myself.

VALDÉS. And still in this, Signora, consists the deception; that not knowing yourself, you think you do. I give you to know that he must be a very spiritual person who entirely knows himself.

GIULIA. I believe it may be so. And since this knowledge is of so much importance, instruct me what I must do to know myself.

VALDÉS. The first thing you ought to do

is to persuade yourself that you do not know yourself. The second is, to know indeed the necessity you have to know yourself. The third is, to pray God that he would open the eyes of your understanding so that you could know yourself. The fourth, to occupy yourself a little every day in examining your affections and appetites which incline you to disobey God. This inclination you must consider comes to you through original sin, and, therefore, you should hold it as the more pernicious, because it is natural to you, and so this causes you to love yourself without restraint, and to desire everything for yourself. Hence you will learn to trust not at all in yourself; so will you live always above yourself. After this, you may run a little over your past life, and you will find many defects, which will lead you to know what you are. You will discover, as David discovered, much inward iniquity and much rebellion against God. With him you will learn that every man is false and a liar; that is to say, that he has an ill opinion of the things of God. You will know with Jeremiah

G

that the heart of man is perverse, and you will know what God says: that the imagination of the thoughts of the human heart are evil continually<sup>1</sup>, and you will discover in yourself much ingratitude that you have used against God. You will know this every time you examine, on one side, the blessings you have received from his hand, as well as the general ones that all people in the world partake of, also the particular favours you enjoy, especially *f. 35.* the benefit of the suffering of Christ and of your having been drawn to the knowledge of it, so that you possess and rejoice in it; and on the other side, when you examine your actions, in all of which you have shown great ingratitude, in evil deeds, by having offended God who gave you the being you have, and who redeemed you by his most precious blood; and in those acts that appear to you good, because you will understand how you did them, not through your love to God, but the love of yourself, since you have been living, not in the love of God, but in the love of yourself. This being the vice of ingratitude, it is

<sup>1</sup> Gen. vi. 5.



so much the more abominable and vile in you, as that you have received probably more of the gifts of God in person and in mind than any other individual now living. Think, then, whether you have reason to stand ill with yourself and to suspect every evil, and thus you will live always carefully watchful over yourself.

It is proper that you enter every day into the knowledge of this deficiency and ingratitude, not to remain there, but to pass forward to the *eighth step*. This will be self-aborrence. To this you will readily come, because as much better you know yourself, so much the more will you abhor and suspect yourself of all evil; and although you will not entirely abhor yourself, you will at least lose the love you bear towards yourself. For this reason as much more and better a thing is known that is evil in itself, much more it is to be hated. I do not say that you should show your self-aborrence by misusing your person, but by despoiling your heart of its self-love, which is the greatest hindrance we have to grace, it being the case that we have no enemy so deadly as

that the heart of man is perverse, and you will know what God says: that the imagination of the thoughts of the human heart are evil continually<sup>1</sup>, and you will discover in yourself much ingratitude that you have used against God. You will know this every time you examine, on one side, the blessings you have received from his hand, as well as the general ones that all people in the world partake of, also the particular favours you enjoy, especially<sup>f. 35.</sup> the benefit of the suffering of Christ and of your having been drawn to the knowledge of it, so that you possess and rejoice in it; and on the other side, when you examine your actions, in all of which you have shown great ingratitude, in evil deeds, by having offended God who gave you the being you have, and who redeemed you by his most precious blood; and in those acts that appear to you good, because you will understand how you did them, not through your love to God, but the love of yourself, since you have been living, not in the love of God, but in the love of yourself. This being the vice of ingratitude, it is

<sup>1</sup> Gen. vi. 5.

so much the more abominable and vile in you, as that you have received probably more of the gifts of God in person and in mind than any other individual now living. Think, then, whether you have reason to stand ill with yourself and to suspect every evil, and thus you will live always carefully watchful over yourself.

It is proper that you enter every day into the knowledge of this deficiency and ingratitude, not to remain there, but to pass forward to the *eighth step*. This will be self-abhorrence. To this you will readily come, because as much better you know yourself, so much the more will you abhor and suspect yourself of all evil; and although you will not entirely abhor yourself, you will at least lose the love you bear towards yourself. For this reason as much more and better a thing is known that is evil in itself, much more it is to be hated. I do not say that you should show your self-abhorrence by misusing your person, but by despoiling your heart of its self-love, which is the greatest hindrance we have to grace, it being the case that we have no enemy so deadly as

this; for it is that which in every possible way and manner labours to separate us from God; rather it keeps us in so blind a state and so carried away by it, that we scarcely remember God, and hence the prophet Micah says: "a man's enemies are those of his own house."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Signora, if you wish to walk lightly along this Christian path, entering frequently into a knowledge of your own misery and weakness, labour to banish this mortal enemy, self-love, from your breast. And know for a certainty that, when this is driven out, the Holy Spirit may quickly, quickly come and dwell in you.

And as you go on stripping your heart of self-love you will go forward clothing it with the love of God, it is then proper that you advance very soon to the *ninth step*. This is, that as you take a small portion of the day to enter into a knowledge of yourself, in order to come by this to disenamour yourself of yourself, so, without dwelling long upon this, you take another small portion of time to enter into acquaintance with God, in order thus to

<sup>1</sup> Micah vii. 6.

enamour yourself with him. This you will readily come to, seeing that the more anything good in itself is known, so much the more it is loved. And that you should the more willingly enter into this knowledge, know what Christ says: "and this is life eternal, that *f.* 36. they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent;"<sup>1</sup> and that the wise man says, that the knowledge of God is perfect justification; and that to know justification, and the properties (*virtù*) of God is the root and foundation of immortality.

GIULIA. You make account that as I have not known how to know myself, so I have less known how to understand God. Teach me how I can know him.

VALDÉS. There are three ways by which persons have arrived and do come to a knowledge of God. One is by the light of nature. This light the Gentile philosophers had, and this those people have at the present day to whom Christ is not known. St. Paul spoke of this knowledge when he said, that by the visible

<sup>1</sup> John xvii. 3.

things of creation people come to a knowledge of the invisible things of God.<sup>1</sup> And it is thus: that reflecting on this mundane frame of things in which they behold so much that is excellent, they go on investigating and imagining what they do not see, and by the one and the other they arrive at the knowledge that God who made these things is omnipotent. And going on farther, to the consideration of the admirable providence with which he governs and regulates all things, in such a manner that one does not interfere with another, rather one assists and serves the others, they arrive at the knowledge that God is supremely wise, and is indeed wisdom itself. Again, besides this, passing on to the consideration of the equality with which, without distinction, all these blessings, earthly and celestial, are distributed to the people of the world, they know that God is supreme goodness. In this way people of the world, having only the light of Nature, reading in the volume of created things, have known and do now know in God omnipotence, wisdom, and goodness.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 20.

Another way to the knowledge of God is by sacred Scripture; I mean by the Old Testament, which gave a knowledge of God, but imperfectly, exhibiting him as angry, cruel, and vindictive; and therefore it calls him a God of vengeance, and Lord of hosts, and such similar severe names. In this manner the blind Hebrews knew God; yet altogether it is a less obscure knowledge than that the Gentiles possessed, although they would yet serve as slaves, indeed they even now serve as such. The third way of knowing God is by Christ. This way is the certain, clear, and safe way; this is the straight, royal, and noble way. And know, Signora, that in knowing God through Christ consists the whole being of a Christian; for to know God through Christ it is necessary first to know Christ himself. And because we cannot know Christ by the light of Nature, nor by other human industry, if God does not internally illumine and open the vision of our souls, I say that this knowledge of God through Christ is supernatural knowledge for which the special grace of God is necessary. And that it is the truth, that

we cannot have the true knowledge of God except through Christ, Christ himself demonstrates, saying: "no man can come to him, *f. 37.* except his Eternal Father draw him."<sup>1</sup> And he shows it again by his answer to Peter, when Peter acknowledged him to be the true Son of God, saying to him: "blessed art thou, Simon son of John, for this thou hast not gained by human reason, nor by the light of Nature, but my Father who is in heaven has revealed it unto thee."<sup>2</sup> When we know God through Christ, we know him as loving, benign, merciful, compassionate, because we find in Christ, love, benignity, mercy, and compassion. See here, Signora, three ways of knowing God, according to three different kinds of people who have had, and still have, a knowledge of God. And because the two first are not to your purpose, you will let them pass, and only exercise yourself in the third, which is, to know God through Christ. But in order that this exercise may be profitable, it is proper that you should learn to know Christ, not by knowledge gained by custom, nor acquired by

<sup>1</sup> John vi. 44.<sup>2</sup> Matt. xvi. 17.



the intellect and human industry, but by the light of faith inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is needful for you in this manner to learn rightly to know Christ if you wish to come perfectly to know God through Christ.

GIULIA. I know not that I have anything to reply to you; so much it seems to me that I know Christ well, if there be not some other secret cognizance to which I have not arrived.

VALDÉS. Now this secret cognizance is what I said persons must come to by inspiration. And therefore we should not think the public cognizance of Christ sufficient, which an assassin or a traitor has. St. John deceives us, saying: "he that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar."<sup>1</sup>

GIULIA. You seem to me to straiten me much, and I feel it so much the more as I have nothing to answer you. Now then for your life let us not lose time, but open a little to me the way by which I may enter into the true cognizance of Christ.

VALDÉS. I will give you, Signora, some principles, by means of which, commending

<sup>1</sup> 1 John ii. 4.

yourself to God, he will himself reveal the rest to you. And so I say, since you already believe that Christ is truly God and truly man, as God, equal with his Eternal Father and one and the same with Him, the true cognizance of Christ consists, Signora, in knowing and considering to what purpose the Son of God came into the world; and was made man; why he suffered; and why he arose again.

GIULIA. I wish to learn from you how you consider these three things.

VALDÉS. You may consider, Signora, that Christ came into the world to make satisfaction for original sin. Because this having been an infinite crime in respect to God who was offended, it was necessary that the satisfaction should be infinite, and this could not be made except by God himself, who is infinite. Therefore the Son of God, made man, has made satisfaction for the sin of the first man, and together with his, for all the sins of all persons who had been, were then, are now, and shall be; and to

*f.* 38. *f* them who forsake the benefit of this propitiation it will be wanting by their own fault. Christ came to qualify men that they might

become the sons of God. He came to show us the way to heaven. He came to confound the pride of the flesh, and to preach humility of spirit. He came to destroy death. He came to break the power of the devil. He came to give and to communicate with us of his own Spirit by which we might do the will of God, for by the Law alone had God before declared his will to us, but the Law did not give us the power by which we could fulfil it. He came to show us the love that his Eternal Father bears to the human race, which is most perfectly seen and known in Christ. And in short, he came to open to us the gates of Paradise, and to qualify us so that we might enter therein.

Now considering these causes for which Christ came, think you whether you could acquire by any other means than by the Son of God made man, so many and such singular blessings. Besides this, when you wish to consider wherefore he suffered, Christ himself shall teach you, saying: *cum exaltatus fuero a terra omnia traham ad meipsum*, that is, "and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw

all things unto me;"<sup>1</sup> as though he said: in order to uproot people from the things of this world, and enamour them with the things of life eternal, it is needful that I be crucified; and saying in another place that it was necessary he should suffer on the cross that all who believed in him might be saved.<sup>2</sup> And know for a certainty that there is nowhere that we can better know God than in Christ crucified. I can say yet more, that if the contemplation of Christ crucified does not disenamour you of the things of the world and enamour you of the things of God, you will be always miserably bound to created things. So much so, that one of the reasons why I think St. Paul calls Christ the mediator between God and man<sup>3</sup> is, because we can neither know, believe, nor love God, but by contemplating Christ crucified; who suffering, made it sweet to suffer; and enduring, made it easy to endure; and being injuriously treated, made injuries sweet; and dying, gave to death itself a relish. Do not these reasons appear to you most sufficient why Christ should have suffered? Does it not

<sup>1</sup> John xii. 32.    <sup>2</sup> Luke xxiv. 46.    <sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 5.

seem to you that Christ has shown so much love in this as to satisfy us why we should dis-  
enamour ourselves of self-love, and enamour  
ourselves with God? But considering still  
further, you will find that Christ arose from  
the dead that we might arise with him, as well  
in spirit in this life, as in body in the life eter-  
nal. And the spiritual resurrection is when  
through dying to the Old man we come to  
be revived in the New man. This is the pass-  
ing from death unto life; and thus as Christ  
through dying came to the resurrection, so we  
by denial of self come to the newness of life. *f. 39.*  
And this is what Christ says to Nicodemus:  
“except a man be born of water and of the  
Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of  
God.”<sup>1</sup> You will consider also in Christ,  
that he ascended up on high to raise our  
souls to the contemplation of heavenly things.  
To these St. Paul invites us, saying: “if,  
brethren, ye are raised spiritually with Christ,  
raise your minds to things above, where  
Christ sits at the right hand of his Eternal  
Father; search out the things on high, not

<sup>1</sup> John iii. 5.

those that are upon the earth.”<sup>1</sup> And lastly, consider that Christ sent the Holy Spirit that we might be taught the truth of these things, that thereby all love of earthly things banished away, we might be inflamed with the love of spiritual things, and through means of it recover and restore within us that *image* of God to the *likeness* of which we were created.

By these considerations, Signora, God aiding you, and favouring you with his grace, you may be enabled to come, little by little, to the perfect knowledge of Christ, and through Christ to the true knowledge of God. And thus you will go on by it, loving God and loving Christ. In the same manner you will go forward verifying in yourself those truths that you confess in the Creed, in a mode that what you now confess through obedience, merely subjecting your intellect, you will then confess through some experience. In this manner, that as joined with the first cognizance of God by the light of Nature, which the Gentiles had, united with the knowledge

<sup>1</sup> Col. iii. 1, 2.

gained of him through the Scriptures of the Old Testament which the Jews have, a person can with truth say that he believes in one God, the Father, omnipotent Creator of heaven and earth ; so also and much better than they, after you have known Christ, and through Christ known God, and through God returning to know Christ [more fully], you will be able to say, or to speak more correctly, you will say with truth, feeling in your soul that which you say, the same the others have said and confessed ; and passing beyond these, you will declare with truth that you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our only Lord. You will believe him to be so because the love and obedience with which you know that Christ showed himself most obedient to the will of God and all the other divine perfections that you know to be in Christ, will certify you that Christ is the Son of God ; and the sweetness and charity that you will consider in Christ will constrain you to hold him alone as your absolute Lord.

And passing further in the truth, you will believe that he was conceived by the

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<sup>1</sup> Col. iii. 1, 2.



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And passing further in the truth, you will believe that he was conceived by the

operation of the Holy Spirit ; because the admirable perfection you will know to be in Christ will assure you that his generation, or conception, was not an ordinary occurrence, but truly the work of the Holy Spirit. And with this assurance entering more profoundly  
*f. 40.* into the knowledge of Christ, you will chastely confess that he was born from the womb of the Virgin Mary, because you will understand that such perfection could not be born but of a most perfect mother, and yet it is consistent that she was a virgin before the birth, in the birth, and after the birth.

After this, when you shall feel within your soul that, contrary to all natural reason, suffering is sweet to you, affliction grateful, and glorious the cross, knowing truly that glory would not be found in trouble, nor honour in calumny, if Christ had not dignified both, then with living faith will you confess, that Christ suffered under the presidency of Pontius Pilate. And when you shall have crucified and buried with Christ your Old man with all his affections and appetites, you will not have any doubt in believing and con-

fessing that Christ was crucified, dead and buried.

After this, when you become in any manner free from the burden of your appetites and affections, considering that thus as Christ has freed you from that hell, so also he freed the holy fathers from Hades (*limbo*), you will believe in truth that Christ descended into hell.

And when, passing further on, you feel the enlivening of the New man, and by this you will see that you are raised with Christ, you will be constrained to confess that Christ himself, the third day rose from the dead. And when you shall see and feel that all your desires are directed to the Spirit, all walking on towards heaven, you will know that Christ already is in heaven, seated on the right hand of the Father, and thus you will confess it. Your soul at once inflamed with desire that the world may behold Christ glorified, since it already saw him suffering, taking it for certain it must be so, you will confess that Christ must come to judge the living and the dead.<sup>1</sup> And because the Holy Spirit who

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 52.

- dwells in you will open your eyes, you will
- recognise the same Spirit in many other persons, agreeable to what David says: *Qui timent te, videbunt me, et lætabuntur*: that is, "they that fear thee will see me and be glad;"<sup>1</sup> with the whole heart and a ready tongue you will confess the Holy Spirit. With the same knowledge you will believe the holy catholic Church and the spiritual communion of holy persons who are in it. Thus, you will truly know that Christ has here on earth a Church universal, holy by participation with the holiness of Christ, which Church contains and embraces good and bad, and which holds a spiritual union of holy persons maintained by the grace of the Holy Spirit, who live in faith, hope, and charity. And knowing that you have confessed your sins to
  - f. 41. a priest of this universal Church, and being absolved, having given credit to the absolution that he, on the part of God, has given you, feeling the soul peaceful and quieted, you will confess in truth that in this universal Church is remission of sins.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxix. 74.

Besides this: when by inward experience you have felt the truth of all the rest that a faithful Christian ought to believe, you will not doubt of the confession of the resurrection of the body. This will be so much the more easy for you to confess, as you will have confessed the resurrection of Christ, having begun to feel in your soul the advantage of it. Finally, when you shall feel and enjoy so much of the sweetness and love of Christ here in this world as is to be felt and enjoyed, taking this sense and enjoyment for an earnest of what you will yet have to feel and enjoy in the other life to which you will expect certainly to go to rejoice perpetually with Christ, you will not hesitate to confess the Life Eternal.

And now, when you hold such inward experience, yours will be living and true faith, because you will have the experience of it within you. Now mark well, Signora, and consider the fruit you will gather from the knowledge of God through Christ. And considering that you will be so much a Christian as you have this knowledge of God by Christ lively in your soul, I am sure you will willingly

forget so much of yourself, entering into this divine cognizance; in which you ought to enter many times a day, if you wish to walk by this Christian path. I also desire that you will do so, Signora, for I wish you to begin at once to walk in it, and that the time may not slip away in mere desires, therefore I will not say more to you than has been said about this knowledge of Christ. I hope well in God's goodness that as you begin to enter upon this way you will find so many things of which I have not known how to make mention here, that since you now keep me so long talking, so you will then keep me but a short time in speaking.

GIULIA. Rather, it has gratified me so much to hear you discourse, that the greatest displeasure you have done me has been the passing so briefly through subjects so high and so important. Besides, I tell you that wishing not to interrupt you, I omitted to ask you some things that occurred to me; but as they have already gone from my memory it is of no consequence. Go on.

VALDÉS. I know not what more to say to

you on this subject, except that I wish what has been already said may be used by you more as a way-mark to point to the entrance of the knowledge of God and of Christ, than as an introduction into it, because the introduction must be made by the special gift and grace of God, which you ought always most affectionately to ask for, and when you so ask it of him, I promise you that he will not deny you.

GIULIA. Great is the power that the word of God has! I say so because I assure you, of all the arguments I hear from you, there is none that so freshly increases the resolution I have to walk by this Christian path. *f. 42.*

VALDÉS. All these new resolutions you ought, Signora, to embrace, and acknowledge to come from the hand of God. And know that my words cannot be sufficient for this if the Holy Spirit did not stand within yourself, soliciting you. Now because in nothing can people entirely know and comprehend the love God bears to us, his mercy, his compassion, his benignity, except in Christ, for this reason I say, Signora, that the most certain way and the most royal road to come to a

knowledge of God is to know him through Christ. And so Christ himself says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life,"<sup>1</sup> and so the Eternal Father draws us to know Christ, and Christ leads us to know the Eternal Father, and we cannot come to Christ [God?] but by Christ, and life eternal consists in knowing God, and in knowing Christ. Hence Christ himself, speaking to his Eternal Father, says: "this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent into the world."<sup>2</sup>

GIULIA. I pray God that he would give me grace to know him in truth, even as he wishes to be known.

VALDÉS. Signora, hold firm confidence in God that you will certainly know him, and knowing him you will endeavour to enamour yourself of him, using this knowledge for this purpose.

And this will be the *tenth step*. I desire, that exercising yourself in the knowledge of God and in the knowledge of Christ, you enamour yourself of God and of Christ: I

<sup>1</sup> John xiv. 6.

<sup>2</sup> John xvii. 3.



mean to say that you begin to enamour yourself of God and of Christ. Because I have already told you, in what has passed, sufficiently of this love; referring to that, I do not wish to detain you by saying anything particularly of the necessity we have for it, what wonderful effects it produces in the soul where it exists lively and fervent, and how, according to St. John, "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love God dwells in him,"<sup>1</sup> which is surely a different dignity and other happiness, than living to the world and the world living in us. I say then that I wish to pass by all this, and come to tell you and assure you that, as by means of the knowledge of yourself you will lose your own self-love, so much through the knowledge of God will you gain of the love of God. And this is to go out of yourself and to enter into God.

GIULIA. It is a usual saying that what is not seen is so far not understood. I had heard tell a thousand times of this going out of a person's self to enter into God, but

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv. 16.

never, in all I have heard, has it been accomplished to my comprehension until now.

VALDÉS. You are so much the more under obligation to love God since he has preserved you so long in this world as to come to know this, which until now you have not understood.

GIULIA. You are right. May it please God that I may know how to profit from it.

VALDÉS. So much will you do this as you constrain your will to confide entirely in God. And because as much the firmer faith exists  
f. 43. *f*in our soul, so much more fervent is charity, and as much the more fervent is charity, so much stronger is faith, I wish you, Signora, to refresh in your memory continually what the Church commands you to believe.

GIULIA. Then this alone will be enough for the whole day.

VALDÉS. I mean only the Creed, which I wish you to refresh in your memory every day, not by repeating it by rote with the lips, but by simply comprehending and considering it with the mind; and this will be the *eleventh step*.

Since you have seen, by what I have before told you, in faith is readiness to believe and confidence in believing things to come, you will confirm yourself by the consideration of things past. I mean to say that, as the expectation of the effect that you know the preaching of the Gospel of Christ has made upon persons, makes you sure that God has been true in the past, so now you will strengthen yourself in believing that he will be so in what remains to be accomplished; such as in the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, life eternal, the condemnation of the wicked and the salvation of the good. In like confidence you will confirm and strengthen yourself by bringing to remembrance some promises God has made and which are found accomplished; such as the sending Christ into the world for the salvation of the human race, which he had promised to the patriarchs and prophets; and such as the promise of succession to Abraham. And coming down to the New Testament, you will recollect that Christ promised that he would rise from the dead, and he arose; he promised that he

would send the Holy Spirit, and he sent it; he promised that faith should not fail in the Christian Church, and it has not failed; he promised that he would be with his Christian people to the end of the world, and until the present time he has been, is now, and will be; he promised that when the Holy Spirit should come to the apostles, it would teach them all truth, and so it was accomplished. Now, finding, Signora, that he has performed all these promises, it will be an easy thing to you to give belief to all he shall say to you. And so when you are sensible that he tells you to have no anxiety to provide the things of this world, but to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and that he will provide all these things, you will believe it, and you will confide in him. And in the same manner, when with confidence in his bounty and liberality you shall hear it said to you that Christ promises to give us all we ask of him, you will hold it certain that he will give you what you ask, and if he does not grant it, you will believe it to be through your unbelief; in this manner you will confirm and

strengthen yourself in the faith in proportion to your confidence. And since thus entering into the knowledge of God and of Christ, you will enamour yourself with God and with Christ and put all your confidence in the promises of God through Christ, so also beloved of God and of Christ, and you relying *f.* 44. God and upon Christ, it is proper that by these means you pass one more step forward.

This will be to confirm yourself in the expectation of eternal life, in which you hope to live and enjoy God and Christ for ever. This will be the *twelfth step* in this Christian way.

In the consideration of this, you will endeavour to dispose your mind in such a manner that you may have a living expectation of enjoying the presence of God in glory, so firm and certain as not to have a doubt of it. And know surely, that as much as you have of hope, so much you will have of faith; and as much as you have of faith, you will have so much of charity. And in like manner, as much as you have of charity, so much will you have of faith, and as much of faith, so much of hope;

because these three Christian virtues always go so much in brotherhood, that one never exists without the other; I mean when one exists perfectly and lives perfectly in the soul. Are you satisfied with these twelve steps that I have shown you?

GIULIA. You may think that if they satisfied me the case would be, that I should be out of these troubles and disgusts in which I live, as you well know, and which have kept me so estranged from myself that if you had seen me before you would not know me now.

VALDÉS. Signora, trust in Christ, and set yourself to go to him by this way, and believe me that he will help you more completely to scatter all your disgusts and troubles, and with such good companionship there is nothing in this life that will be wearisome and disgusting, except to see how people of the world offend God and contradict and slight his law and his doctrine.

GIULIA. All this I fully believe. But what shall I do in order to remember all that you have said upon this subject?

VALDÉS. If you do not recollect the whole,

it will be sufficient that you remember a part of it. And I wish to undeceive you in this ; that I do not give you these rules that you should be bound to them, because it is my purpose that you make use of them only as a CHRISTIAN ALPHABET, by the means of which you may come to Christian PERFECTION.

Of all that has been said, I shall be satisfied if you remember that the first step is, to know that the way in which you have been walking to the present time cannot conduct you to Christ.

The second is, that you hold the resolution to walk by this, which without fail will conduct you to Christ.

The third, that you determine to begin to walk by it.

The fourth, that you lay aside worldly manners and conversation, which tend to separate you from God, and that you put away all curious speculations.

The fifth, that you occupy a portion of every day to enter into a knowledge of the world.

The sixth, that by means of this know-

ledge you endeavour to slight and abhor the world.

The seventh, that you take a little time every day to enter into a knowledge of yourself.

The eighth, that by means of this knowledge  
*f. 45.* you labour to free your heart from your self-love.

The ninth, that you take another small portion of time to enter into the knowledge of God, and that you enter by the knowledge of Christ.

The tenth, that through this knowledge you enamour yourself with God through the medium of Christ, enamouring yourself in like manner with Christ.

The eleventh, that as well by the narratives of the Old Testament as by those of the New, you confirm faith in your soul, as much in belief as in confidence.

The twelfth, that in the same way you confirm and strengthen in your soul the expectation of Eternal Life.

And because I wish you to walk by this way as a daughter (*Signora*), and not as a



servant, as free and not as a slave, with love and not with fear, take notice that I do not wish you to take these small portions of time that I mention for these considerations superstitiously, setting one hour apart for them more than another, or one part of your house more than another, because I wish you to take them with freedom of spirit, at the hour most agreeable to you, and in the part of the house that most suits you ; and when you have not any other convenient time, it will satisfy me if you take it when you awake in bed ; and I shall be content with this, that, when you go walking about the house saying the Lord's prayer, not considering or minding what you are repeating, having your attention occupied with worldly things, and sometimes in building castles in the air, you consider all these occasions as time lost. And you already see that you can do all that I have so far told you without any worldly person hearing or noticing you. And you also perceive that all this is a kind of service that no one can hinder or disturb you in, except solely your own ill inclination, forgetfulness, and carelessness of God.

GIULIA. I see it well. It is a difficult thing for a person to have to confine her attention upon such things.

VALDÉS. It is hard at the first, through the repugnance there is on the part of the old nature, but it presently becomes easy as that goes on dying. Besides, I know not why you should suppose the daily consideration of eight subjects so difficult; for although four of them are distasteful, the other four are so lovely and sweet, that they are sufficient to make all the others sweet and tasteful; so much the more, as these considerations do not occupy more than the time that would otherwise be lost.

GIULIA. May God grant me his grace, because I go on perceiving it is very necessary.

VALDÉS. Yes, he will give it you while you are indeed conscious that you have need of it; and with this conviction you will ask it of him, and know that this conviction also comes to you through the special grace of God. Now I wish you to recall to memory what little I told you of the division St. Paul makes of man, separating him into the

Old man and the New man. I do not know whether you clearly recollect what I said to you about this.

GIULIA. I fully remember it.

VALDÉS. Since you recollect, without repeating it I may say, Signora, that you must *f. 46.* begin your Christian walk by the mental exercise of what we have discoursed in the twelve steps, and I say that you must continue it by another exercise, which also I wish to be mental, so that you may go forward with your view of gaining Christ without losing the world. This is, that you live with continual care and vigilance to mortify the Old man in you and revive the New. I wish you to know that as by knowing yourself you cease to love yourself, and by knowing God you will come to love him, so that as far as you leave the love of your own self-love, so much you gain of the love of God ; and so neither more nor less, as much as you mortify the Old man, so much you make alive the New.

GIULIA. It is needful that you tell me how I must make this mortification and vivification.

VALDÉS. I have already told you that making the mortification, you make at the same time the revivification of the New man; and you will make the mortification by denial of your own will; I mean, by denying and opposing your will in all things, little as well as great. And know certainly that no one can in any manner go to Christ without this denial of the will. Because our will being naturally inclined to love itself, and to wish entirely the contrary to what Christ wills, think whether it is not necessary to deny it and conquer it in order to follow Christ. And hence Christ says the same: "if any man will come after me, let him deny himself," that is to say, deny his self-will, and take on his shoulders the cross of his labours and sufferings, and follow me.<sup>1</sup> St. Paul has the same; when he counsels us not to do whatever we wish, he means to say, that we deny our wills. And that God is offended by our following our own wills entirely, appears clearly in what he says by Isaiah, speaking of fasts, where it is one of the things he reprehends, for which he says, why our fast is not

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi. 24.

good is, because, at the same time that we fast, we keep entire our own wills.<sup>1</sup> And this is, because so long as our wills remain entire, the old nature remains alive ; and the Old man living, the flesh with its appetites and affections lives and reigns within us, and in the same manner self-love also, by which we are rendered idols of pride and arrogance. So that in every way, Signora, it is proper for you to exercise yourself in this denial of your own will.

GIULIA. This appears to me to be a hard step.

• VALDÉS. Hard it would be to a low, plebeian and servile mind, but to a mind lofty, generous and courageous, such as that God has given you, nothing is difficult ; rather, if you rightly consider, it is a harder thing to have your will so free and loose, as to lead you as with a leash to everything, whatever it wishes for ; this is cruel and unbearable servitude. Does it not appear to you that I *f.* 47. am right?

GIULIA. If I could do as you tell me as

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah lviii. 3.

certainly as I know that you are very right in all this, I promise you there should be no person in the world who would set foot before me in this Christian way, but . . . .

VALDÉS. Do not say so, for your life, Signora, but recover, recover heart; be not dismayed; think that the weight of all this you have not to bear, but Christ for you, hence love will make it light and easy.

GIULIA. Well, now then, since it must be done, let us not waste words. Tell me how I must act in order to deny my will.

VALDÉS. As to the beginning, it is proper, Signora, that you take this for granted, that your will is your domestic enemy, always inviting you to things that separate you from God. And because it frequently covers such things with a mantle of virtue and sanctity, determine, Signora, from this day forward, not to do, say, or think anything your will offers to you without first examining it very strictly, applying the understanding to it, in order that the understanding may verify it by the rule of the law of God. And because all things are either good in themselves, evil in

themselves, or indifferent, be on the watch, Signora, and when the will would invite you to do, say, or think anything, examine it first, as I say, by the rule of the law of God ; and if you find that such a thing is wrong in itself, drive it from your fancy. Command your will to carry you no further, by the example of Christ, who, when the devil requested his worship, answered him with the law of God : "*Dominum Deum tuum adorabis*;" that is, "thou shalt worship the Lord thy God."<sup>1</sup> As though he said : I will not worship thee, because the law of God ordains that none shall be worshipped except himself. If you find the thing good in itself, put it at once into practice without losing the opportunity. And if you find what is offered to your mind to be indifferent, think a little over it, and finding that more evil than good may come of it, let it alone ; or finding that more good than evil may come, take it, but be very careful that you do not deceive yourself; for the devil frequently transforms himself into an angel of light, and often the flesh moves us, and we

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iv. 10.

think it is the Spirit. And if such a thing be of the nature that it can be neither ill nor good, more than a satisfaction to your will, to leave it or take it is of little consequence; yet it is quite true, it may be better to leave it, because as much more you deny your will, so much more you mortify it. But notice, Signora, what I say: I wish you to make this examination continually, and never be moved to do, say, or think anything without first taking these considerations that I have mentioned.

GIULIA. I will constrain myself to this the best I can. But I wish, in order to understand this better, that you would explain it more to me, putting it practically.

VALDÉS. The true explanation will be that  
*f. 48.* you begin to occupy yourself in the exercise of it, and by this means you will learn more in one week than without it you would learn in ten years.

GIULIA. At all events, I shall be much gratified if you will tell me some particulars of it.

VALDÉS. I say, Signora, that because our



will always moves itself to wish something for one of the five bodily senses, it is proper that you have much care over them, not leaving them to be disordered in anything, in such manner that neither by the eyes, the ears, the taste, smell, or touch, anything may enter to the will which can change or disturb it. It is needful to exercise this care even so far that the senses may continue so mortified to the things of the world that they find no delight in them ; yet neither is it proper to be negligent of them, for by our carelessness their influence may again revive. And know, Signora, that so much as you mortify the outward senses, so much will you revivify the interior ones. And this will be certain, that as much less you gratify yourself in regarding corporal things, so much the more will you take pleasure in viewing, with lively faith and heartfelt love, things spiritual. So much less you take pleasure in hearing light and trifling things, the more will you occupy yourself in hearing and listening outwardly to the word of God, and inwardly to divine inspirations ; and thus you will hear the voice of God when

he shall speak within with your soul. As little that you delight in outward viands, so much the more will you inwardly awake and enliven yourself to relish interior things which are the feast of the soul. As little as exterior odours please and give you satisfaction, so much more and better will your soul scent, as it were, things divine and spiritual, and will say to Christ as the good spouse : *Currimus in odorem unguentorum tuorum*; that is : “we will run to the odour of thy unguents.”<sup>1</sup> And as much less the body enjoys the touch of things that are pleasurable and delightful to it, so much the more will your soul affect to be nailed, hands and feet, with Christ on the cross. Hence it is proper, Signora, that you constantly stand prepared in the denial of these outward senses, since you know that by this means you will enliven the interior. At the same time you will, little by little, mortify in yourself the respect for the world; for so much the more will you estimate the Divine Being, as in less esteem you hold the world. You will mortify every feeling of

<sup>1</sup> Cant. i. 3.

anger, every sentiment of retaliation. You will do this by the exercise of patience, of suffering, of humility, of contempt of the world. And because I wish these Christian virtues to be ever alive in your soul, I desire that you examine and take a review of your mind from day to day, to know how it stands well grounded in these respects. You will do this, reflecting truly, and in a lively manner, how you receive with patience any adversity that may come upon you ; how you bear an injury, or a burden that may be imposed *f. 49.* upon you ; how you conduct yourself when a low and plebeian person takes precedence of you ; how you pass through the confusion of the world when worldly persons despise and regard you lightly. I wish you to examine at the same time how strong you are in faith, how sure in hope, how fervent in charity. You should do this taking into account how much you confide in the promises of God with regard to outward things. Because from these you may form a judgment how far you trust him in eternal things. For indeed, unless you determine to confide in God that he will

provide things necessary for the body without your anxiety, I know not how you can resolve to confide in him that he will give you the things that belong to the soul, or how you can expect to enjoy God in the life eternal. And examining all your works, whether they go forward directed to your bodily or your spiritual benefit, or directed to the honour of God and the good of your neighbour, you will know that you are so far advanced in charity.

I desire further, that when this examination has been made, if you do not find your appetites and feelings so mortified that those virtues truly live and reign within you, turn then your soul's regard upon Christ crucified, and say from the heart these or similar words: "Oh Christ, favour me, Lord, with thy grace, so that in thy strength overcoming these my appetites, and mortifying these my senses, these Christian virtues may be planted and grow up in my soul, so that thou, my Lord, mayst ever live in me, and I in thee!"

GIULIA. How have you given me fresh life by this! You have not said here anything

better. But I wish to understand from you how I shall know that I have made this mortification or vivification.

VALDÉS. I have already told you that this is a state which begins in baptism, and continues through the whole life of man, because whilst he lives he always finds in himself something to mortify. For these appetites and affections within us, through original sin, though restrained, always grow green and come to shoot again. For this reason, I say to you, never be unwatchful, thinking you have made this mortification, until you are so far removed from anger and retaliation that nothing worldly people can do to you shall move you; and until you become so far from desiring or wishing for anything whatever held and possessed by your neighbours, that you would be content that they should rather take of yours than that you should unlawfully have of theirs; and so truly chaste as never impure thought shall reign in your mind; and so far from speaking in prejudice of your neighbours, that you may at all times be ready to excuse and defend them. When

you have obtained all these virtues think then that you have mortified the Old man. And  
*f. 50.* when you shall know your heart so filled with love to God, that it loves nothing out of God, and if it love anything, it loves it for God; and when you shall feel that there is nothing more savoury and sweet on your lips than the name of God; and when you shall in truth behold your life one continual Christian sabbath, then may you think and believe that you have perfectly vivified the New man, and not before.

GIULIA. High perfection is this into which you wish to raise me.

VALDÉS. Even when I may wish to place you in this state of perfection, it ought not to appear great to you; since God has given you such perfection in mind and in person according to the world, it would not be a great thing for you to dispose yourself to it, for he may yet give you the perfection of the spirit according to his nature. So much more, as I do not wish to put you into this perfection in an instant, but I show it to you, and invite you to it; and I entreat you to go forward,

walking towards it at your good leisure, in such manner that neither haste may weary you, nor negligence lead you to turn aside from it.

GIULIA. You give me fresh life by this. Yet, to be candid, it much tries me to have to leave some conversations, in which at times I take some little pleasure, and some curious things with which I pass my time, for I fear that if I leave these things, I shall sink into a melancholy humour that may cause me to live in continual tastelessness.

[VALDÉS.] I little wish to be so rigorous as to ask you to leave all these things at once. It will be well for you to leave them, but if it be very troublesome, you can leave them little by little, but on such conditions, that you remain not in them; and believe me, Signora, that as you go on taking pleasure and relish in the things of God, you will go on to consider those things bitter and insipid in which you now find pleasure and delight.

GIULIA. I clearly see, in short, that you are accommodating yourself to my weakness, not to discourage me.

VALDÉS. Does it appear to you that I am doing wrong?

GIULIA. It rather seems to me that this is the better that you do.

VALDÉS. It appears well to you for this reason, that you wish it well. But let us leave this as it is. I am willing, Signora, to give you yet further licence in order that the difficulty that will arise before you in this path may not lead you to turn aside from it. It is this: that if you are not able so entirely to subdue your appetites and affections in such degree as to be absolutely mistress over them, that you at least moderate and regulate them in such a manner that they be not lords over you. The Stoics dream, by I know not what precepts, to reduce a person to such a state that they cannot be troubled or perturbed in any way by their affections; but to this they are never able to arrive. The good Christian should not seek nor endeavour to be wanting in affections, for he will never succeed with it, nor is it well that he should succeed with it, but he ought to strive to be lord over his affections in such a manner, that his perturbations



and trials may in no degree be able to separate *f.* 51. him from God. I mention this, considering that the Apostle Paul, feeling these perturbations and troubles, said: *Infelix ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis hujus?* that is: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"<sup>1</sup> This he said, feeling troubled and disturbed by his affections, and therefore he desired to be liberated from the prison of the body, although he was so much master of his affections and so superior to them, that even so greatly as they tempted him, they never caused him to fall. The imperfect Christian feels these disturbances and troubles more, the farther he lives from the mortification of the Old man. And so, whilst he is not lord over his affections, yet not yielding himself to be lorded over by them, falling and recovering himself, and at other times stumbling and not falling, he walks onwards towards Christ; and provided he always keeps his attention directed to Christ, God readily pardons his slippings and his falls. They who do not feel these troubles and dis-

<sup>1</sup> Rom. vii. 24.

turbances are those persons who have resigned the lordship to their affections in such degree that they run unchecked along with them without opposition. I am not willing to class such persons in the number of Christians, not to do such injury to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Now since the war against the appetites is difficult, and much more so against the interior affections, against which you, Signora, have to fight, I wish you to keep in your remembrance Christ crucified; carry him at all times and in every place before you for a witness of all your thoughts, words, and actions, and as a shield to preserve you from the assaults that your appetites and affections will make upon you; and I am certain, in this way you will not do, or speak, or think anything contrary to the law of God, because you would be ashamed to be seen by Christ whom you bear with you. Although, at the first, you will not be able to do this so constantly, I am certain that after a time you will be able to do it very easily; I even tell you that very pleasant and tasteful will such companionship be to you.

GIULIA. So I believe it, and so hope I in God that he will grant it to me.

VALDÉS. I desire, Signora, this also of you, that you let not a night pass without examining before you go to sleep in what actions, what words, what thoughts you have spent that day, beginning with the morning, and going through the day until night, examining the little things as well as great; because he who allows himself to be overcome by little things, will more readily allow himself to be vanquished in the great.

And I desire you heartily to censure yourself for time ill gained and ill spent, knowing in truth that this has been by reason of your evil inclinations, and purposing to have more care and watchfulness over yourself another day; and, for the day well spent, I wish you to give thanks to God, truly acknowledging *f. 52.* that whatever of good is in you is the gift of God, and whatever of evil, is of your own stock. And when practicable to make this examination with some spiritual person, the benefit no doubt will be much greater; but I am satisfied if you do it alone by yourself.

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And also because we are often moved to good works not purely for the sake of Christ, but for some purposes and gratifications of our own senses, in such a manner that our self-love and not the love of God incites us to do them, I wish, Signora, that these also which appear to be good works you should suspect, and with this suspicion examine them very strictly; because if it were possible I wish that you may be moved to all of them purely, and sincerely for the love of God; and believe me, this rogue, self-love, is so within us that it wishes to have its part in everything. Indeed I desire that you should not be satisfied with cutting it down, but I wish you to pull it up by the root from your heart, that in no way it may come to grow up again. I wish more, that whenever you converse with any spiritual person you communicate to him and let him share all things that come and go through your fancy, and all your thoughts; for if the person be spiritual, he will know how to give you such advice respecting any of them as will leave you well satisfied and contented. I wish also that you give leave to

all those spiritual persons who may converse with you that, without asking permission, they may tell you what they feel and know of you in your words and conduct.

I wish also that you not only give them leave to do this, but that you entreat and strongly charge them to do so; and surely know that from this you will feel a wonderful spiritual benefit.

And lastly I wish you, Signora, to refresh in your memory from day to day, the idea and image of Christian perfection, in the manner we have here painted it, that putting this on one side, and what you have attained to in this Christian way on the other, you can rightly consider how near you find yourself to that image of perfection, or how far from it. Finding yourself at a distance, I wish you to return, with affectionate impulse and efficacious confidence, to Christ crucified, and address him from the heart: "O Christ Jesus, my Lord and my God! breathe, breathe, O my Lord, into my soul the breath of the Holy Spirit so effectually that with marvellous earnestness I may keep it without wavering

until I may be found entirely transformed to this state of Christian perfection that I hold before my view." This, Signora, is the book in which I desire that you may continually read, for in this you will learn more in one day, than you could learn from all the rest in the world in a hundred years. I say rather

f. 53. that all the good that is written is so far understood and relished as the mind of him who reads stands disposed in this manner; so much so that even sacred Scripture is poison for the mind that has not this humble disposition, that which I desire that you may have; also I desire you may have it most entirely, since you have promised me, that if I put you into a private way by which you can go to God without being seen by the world, you will walk in it. And if that which I have shown to you be not of this nature, I am content that you do not fulfil your word to me.

GIULIA. It rather appears to me so private that I find no difficulty in it greater than its privacy; not because it does not appear to me very good, nor because I have any other wish than I first had to walk in it, but because

it is so inward, that as I did not find the way, or perceive it with my bodily sight, I know not whether I can discover how to walk by it.

VALDÉS. If you find not the way, it is because you have not yet begun to walk in it. Begin, and you will see whether you will find the way. And if you do not see it with the bodily eyes, open the eyes of the soul, and you will then see it. And certainly know, that from having closed these latter, all the evils and sins proceed, into which persons fall in this present life. Think not that you do not discover the path to walk in, because you *will* discover it. Confide therefore in Christ, and mistrust yourself, for thus you must enter, and thence you must continue your journey. And because, amongst other things that will present themselves to you in it to disturb and hinder you, worldly honour and regard, beyond all comparison, obstruct the way more than all others, and as I surely believe that these lead many more souls to hell than any other human passion whatever, I wish, Signora, that you persuade yourself, that your honour and your dishonour depend upon yourself alone,

in such manner that only your bad actions bring dishonour, and only your good ones bring you honour. And in this way not placing your honour in the hands, or in the courtesy of worldly persons, you will have no occasion to inhale honour from them, nor to fear dishonour from them ; with this sentiment you will converse and have intercourse with them with much freedom, and in much inward superiority. This is a thing which, when talking of, seems very easy, and yet I promise you that it is so difficult, that blessed is he who sets himself to do it, and most blessed is he who carries it out. And because, after this respect of the world, the thing that most hinders persons who wish to walk by this Christian path is the false persuasion that we have formed to ourselves, believing that we can find in outward things, satisfaction and contentment, I wish, Signora, that you go armed against this false persuasion with a certain, strong and true opinion. This is, that you assure your mind that in none of such things that you can acquire of yourself without a third person, nor  
f. 54. less from those that persons of the world can



bestow upon you, or take away from you, can you ever be able to find entire contentment, or felicity by gaining them, or dissatisfaction, or unhappiness in the loss of them. And it will be thus: that as you will not expect to find satisfaction, or happiness in riches or in station, nor in the other things that the world and persons of the world give and take; nor unhappiness in being deprived of that which you find you have, not only will you not desire what you have not, but you will possess what you have in such a manner, that when you may be wronged you will not think you have lost anything. The same consideration you can extend to relatives and friends, and also to your own person; because standing in this persuasion, you will not desire health of body, nor fear sickness; you will not desire life, nor dread death, since neither the one rests in your own hand to preserve it, nor can you fly from the other. I ask you not to make yourself so insensible as not to feel these affections, but I ask you to mortify them in such a way that although your mind may regret, it shall not waver or disquiet itself.

GIULIA. This appears to me yet more difficult than the other.

VALDÉS. Now know, Signora, that I have learned this consideration and the other from a heathen Philosopher. He, by these things, so difficult as you view them, sought only, I know not what tranquillity of mind. Now reflect whether they ought to be so disagreeable to a Christian mind which undertakes to walk more readily to Christ, and to go out of itself, more quickly and more radically, in order to enter into Christ. And therefore I supplicate you, Signora, before you put yourself into this practice, that you do not consider it as difficult.

GIULIA. It is a great thing for a person to have to despoil herself of those natural affections, of which she is scarcely conscious.

VALDÉS. I will tell you that it is so great, that David, feeling the difficulty there is, not only in despoiling himself of them but of knowing and understanding them, prays God to cleanse him from these hidden and secret things, which are these affections, and immediately adds, also from presumptuous sins.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xix. 12, 13.

The sacred Prophet considered that among the inward and secret affections, ambition, as it is most natural to man, so it is most dangerous and secret. He therefore so especially asks assistance from God to overcome it.

GIULIA. And with reason. Therefore I tell you in truth that what gives me most fear when I think of walking in this way that you teach me, is, that having constantly heard say that God always punishes them who join him with temptations and persecutions, and finding myself very weak to resist and bear them, I think I shall not be able to persevere.

VALDÉS. It pleases me to hear you say this, because I am certain that causing you to turn over the leaf and to read farther on about this that you have been told, you will lose the fear you now have. Because St. Paul will so well assure you about this, saying to the fearful like you, that God is just and faithful, and that he will in no way suffer us to be tempted or chastened more than our strength is able to bear; and he also there says that God will assist us with his grace,

the more lightly and easily to bear them.<sup>1</sup> So that you can hold for certain, Signora, that God does not permit any one in this present life, to be more tempted, more chastened, or more persecuted, all which he knows, than their strength of mind may be sufficient to endure. Thus to the strong he promises strong temptations, chastisements and persecutions, and with the weak he bears himself mildly. We have an example of this in Job, who by permission of God was tempted and persecuted by Satan as much as his patience was able to bear. But observe that God had always his hand upon Satan that he should not touch Job's life; so by this, as by what David says, that the consolations that God inwardly sent to his soul were in proportion to the misery and anguish with which he was afflicted, you may be confirmed in this truth, that God chastens and tries his servants so much as he sees they are able to bear, and no more. So that for such cause you ought not to shrink from undertaking this Christian enterprise, and once undertaken, to persevere

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. x. 13.

in it, until you go through it valiantly; since it is as St. Paul says: they only receive the crown of glory who walking by this way combat bravely against their adversaries.

GIULIA. You have given me fresh life by this, for I assure you I was strongly tempted by this fear.

VALDÉS. Whenever, Signora, such things come into your imagination, think that they are the work of the devil, and always resist them with the shield of faith, and if you are not able by this to destroy such imagination, mention it freely to some spiritual person whom you may see, who will know how to understand it, and understanding, will know how to assist you in it.

GIULIA. Such persons are in this day as scarce as white flies.

VALDÉS. So much the more should you render thanks to God, since he has placed you in the position, that in this scarcity you speak of, you will have one who will be such to you.

I wish also another thing of you. Cease from this time to employ yourself in read-

ing, or in wishing to know abstruse subjects, although they may be sacred things, in a manner that your understanding be not curiously occupied with them. Because at this beginning, the reading of simple things that may kindle the will, will be much more useful to you ; and believe me, I do not say this without great reason. And because I am sure that in this Christian exercise you will know by experience the truth of what you have heard from me, and many other most Christian truths, and because I have seen by experience that many persons, as soon as they know them, go telling and talking of them

f. 56. without any consideration, whence some inconveniences arise, take care, Signora, in such case to know how to direct yourself wisely, and endeavour to do like the good sheep of the flock that show to their shepherd what herbage they feed upon, by the wool and milk they give him ; and not like the poor ones, that show him theirs by throwing it up by the mouth. And I let you know, that doctrine dressed and digested in the mind produces its fruit ; and that what immediately

escapes by the mouth does not nourish the mind. I desire that you may hold your doctrine in the soul, and not on the tip of the tongue.

GIULIA. It is well ; may God assist me in all things, and do you likewise aid me to compose my outward conduct, since you have so well shown me how to adorn the interior.

VALDÉS. Adorn the interior firstly, Signora, and I promise you that you will have no need of my council, nor that of any one in the world, how to compose the exterior. That you may credit me in this, I wish to show it to you by a comparison, and if it be somewhat repugnant, disguise it. When a skilful physician would heal a scaly body, he does not begin to cure it by scraping the blotches outside, for he knows that if for the present he thoroughly removes them, immediately others come out again afresh. Nor otherwise does he begin to heal it by unguents, because he knows that whatever removes it from the part without drives it into the body and it is the cause of another greater disease. But if he be a good experienced physician, the first thing he does

is to consider the cause whence such a disease proceeds. This understood, he causes the patient to take by the mouth those medicines which he knows to be proper to heal that disease of the body from which the scales proceed, because he understands and knows that the inward disorder once healed, the outward scales fall away without any difficulty. In the same manner a spiritual physician, when he wishes to cure a vicious body, or a licentious one, must not begin by removing the outward superfluities, because as the root of the evil remains within, it immediately returns to come out again, if not in the same way, perhaps by another more dangerous. Nor otherwise must he begin with the unction of superstitious ceremonies and outward services, which whilst they smooth over outward vices, put them within; and thus the disorder becomes more dangerous and hurtful. But if the physician be one of experience, the vices perceived and the outward excesses considered, he knows the cause whence they come, and this known, he gives the medicine that appears to him necessary to heal the inward disease, because he



knows certainly that once healed, the vices and excesses will cease immediately. Do you comprehend what I mean to say?

GIULIA. Fully. And although you have spoken a little of things unpolite, since you have spoken well, I tolerate the allegory. And as you do not wish me to say anything upon this, at least tell me how I ought to conduct myself in matters of outward devotion.

VALDÉS. Take this interior devotion that *f. 57.* I offer you, and it will regulate you in all others; but explain to me what exterior devotions you mean.

GIULIA. Mass, preaching, reading, prayer, fasts, confession, communion and alms. I would wish you at all events to tell me as briefly as you please, your views, respecting the manner I ought to observe in my exercise each of these things; and do not excuse yourself, for I will admit of no excuse.

VALDÉS. In short, Signora, you wish to be always obeyed, and you are right. So much I may say, you ought always to hear mass attentively. And because there are three principal parts in it, the adoration of the most holy

sacrament, the doctrine of the gospel and the epistle, and the prayers, you can draw benefit from all three. From the adoration, you will draw a fresh and fervent desire to incorporate yourself by faith and love in the passion of Christ, and to slay your Old man by Christ, and to resuscitate your New man with Christ. From the doctrine, you will always take something on which to think during that day. In this way, if you hear the priest recite the gospel that begins : *In principio erat verbum*, when he adds to this, *dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri, his qui credunt in nomine ejus*, he means to say : " God gives ability and power to all those who believe in his name to become the sons of God," you can continue thinking on the supreme goodness and mercy of God, with which he calls so vile a creature to so high and excellent a dignity<sup>1</sup> as is the being a daughter of God, and this solely by believing in Christ. In the same manner when you hear the epistle of St. Paul, beginning : *Hoc sentite in vobis quod in Christo Jesu, qui cum in forma Dei esset*, &c., that is to say : " Brethren, let your

<sup>1</sup> In the original *divinità*, evidently an error.

minds have the same contempt of the world and of your own estimation that you know Christ Jesus had, who being the Son of God humbled himself to take the form of a servant, in which he conversed here in the world,"<sup>1</sup>—endeavour to dwell in thought upon the profound humility of Christ, in such a manner that this reflection may confound your pride, make you altogether humble, and desirous to imitate the lowliness and meekness of Christ. In this way you can always gather from the epistle or from the gospel some considerations to remain with you.

GIULIA. I understand it already; go on further.

VALDÉS. From the prayers you will take occasion to elevate your soul towards God, inwardly praying that he would accept what the priest asks in the name of the whole Church.

GIULIA. And does it seem to you that I ought to hear mass every day?

VALDÉS. On feast days, if possible, do not stay away from any. Of the others you will leave only those which, when occupied in some

<sup>1</sup> Phil. ii. 5-7.

work of charity, you cannot go to hear without taking yourself from them. You should go  
f. 58. to hear the sermon with a mind lowly and obedient, as though you went to hear Christ. And when you shall hear something said by the preacher that appears to you good, with a secret prayer entreat God that he will imprint it on your memory, and grant you his grace and favour, by which you may be enabled to put it into practice.

GIULIA. And if the preacher be one of those followed by the world, who preach not Christ, but vain and subtle things, or about philosophy, or I know not what sort of theology, or about their dreams and fables, do you wish me to go to hear him?

VALDÉS. In this you will do so far as seems best to yourself. For my part I can declare that of the whole year I have no times worse spent than those that I lose in hearing some of those preachers, whom you have wisely pictured, and so I seldom hear them.

GIULIA. This is not being willing to be exercised in the virtue of patience.

VALDÉS. It may be so if you will. But I

wish to hear Christ preached in the pulpit, if it be possible. It is very true that however bad may be the preacher, it is well to hear him, if it be only because that, seeing the necessity Christian souls have to hear the doctrine of Christ, you may incite yourself ardently to solicit Christ to send into the Church *his* preachers who preach and teach his most holy doctrine purely and sincerely. Of reading I have told you already, that for the present I would wish that it should be in the most simple things, those that would kindle the will and not occupy the intellect. And when you read portions of the sacred Scriptures, keep in mind that God is speaking to you, and therefore you should go to the reading of it with an humble and obedient mind; and consider, that you read not to know how to reason, but to understand how you ought to live. You must seek in the sacred Scriptures, medicine against temptations by the example of Christ, who being tempted by the devil in the wilderness, to each of his temptations answered him by a passage of Holy Scripture. In the same

manner you must seek remedy against adversities, persecutions, and worldly trials, for, as St. Paul says: all that is there written was written for our instruction.<sup>1</sup>

GIULIA. What books are those you call the most simple?

VALDÉS. Those I used at one time are a little book that they call *De imitatione Christi*, another by *Cassian*, and that by Saint Jerome called the *Lives of the Hermits*, and I think all these are in Italian. This is as to reading.

Prayer is the raising of the mind to God with desire to obtain what it asks of him. The manner of prayer, and what should be asked for in prayer, are such as Christ taught us by St. Matthew: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not do as the hypocrites, for they love to pray in the congregations of the people and in the corners of the streets that they may be seen of men; verily I say unto you, they  
f. 59. have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret; and thy Father who seeth in secret

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 16.

shall reward thee openly.”<sup>1</sup> Christ teaches us by these words that our prayer should be private, as well to avoid vain glory as because the mind outwardly quiet, more easily quiets itself within. And Christ immediately says: and “when thou prayest, use not many words, as the Gentiles do.”<sup>2</sup> Whence he shows that he wishes few words to be used, but much faith and affection in prayer. Afterwards he says: In this manner therefore pray ye: *Pater noster qui es in cœlis, &c.*<sup>3</sup> In this he instructs us that we should not ask for vain or superfluous things in prayer, but for those only which seem to be necessary for the glory of God, for the salvation of the souls of our neighbours and of our own, and for the support of our life. Christ, in another place, teaches us how we ought to pray, saying: “And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”<sup>4</sup> So that in order for prayer to be right, it should be in private, with few words, with much desire, with true and just request, and with entire

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi. 5, 6.<sup>2</sup> Matt. vi. 7.<sup>3</sup> Matt. vi. 9.<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxi. 22.

faith and confidence that God will give us what we shall ask of him. Also Christ teaches us in another place that we should be importunate and persevering in prayer. Yet because vocal prayer frequently kindles and elevates the mind to mental prayer, I would not wish you, Signora, to oblige yourself to repeat a certain number of psalms or paternosters, in order that you may always stand at liberty, for then, God sending to you some good inspiration in prayer, you may be able to dwell in it as long as you feel that your soul has the relish of it.

GIULIA. I do not understand this unless you explain it by some example.

VALDÉS. I mean to say, that when saying the paternoster, you come to repeat: *adveniat regnum tuum*, "thy kingdom come:" and at that passage God shall show you the felicity the soul enjoys when God reigns within it, that you dwell in this consideration. In the same manner, when saying: *cor mundum, crea in me Deus, et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis*, that is: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within



me,"<sup>1</sup> you should feel that your heart begins to be warmed with desire for that purity, and your bosom begins to open, anxious that the Holy Spirit may be renewed in it, without going on with the psalm, feed the fire of your heart with a thought of Christ crucified, and open wider the door of your breast, that your heart may remain purified and your bosom go filled with the Holy Spirit. You will do this, without being obliged to a certain number of psalms or of paternosters. Do you now understand it?

GIULIA. Fully.

VALDÉS. Fasting, as it regards abstinence, rests upon holy Scripture, and conduces to Christian charity. For this, I will leave it always to your discretion, that you make use of abstinence so far as you are conscious that it is necessary to you <sup>f. 60.</sup> to destroy the old nature and vivify the new; and I shall be always pleased if you determine the abstinence, more frequently in the quantity of the food, than in the quality of it. In this manner you can always fast when you wish, without any one

<sup>1</sup> Ps. li. 10.

being sensible of it. As to the fasts of the Church you will do as others do, and for this I give you no rule. I much wish to advise you of this: that if the precepts, as they say, are obligatory according to the intention of him who gives them, I think the persons are few who fulfil the precept of fasting.

GIULIA. Why?

VALDÉS. Because few persons accomplish the effect that the Church wishes them to gain by fasting.

GIULIA. From what do you know this intention of the Church?

VALDÉS. From what is sung in the prelude all Lent, saying: *Qui corporali jejunio vitia comprimis mentem elevas, virtutem largiris et premia*, that is: "Thou O God, who by bodily fasting restrainest the passions, elevatest the mind, bestowest virtue and recompense." From hence it appears that the Church intends that we Christians, by means of fasting, should mortify the sensual appetites that incite us to vice, and exalt our souls towards God, in order that they should be rewarded with the recompense of Christian virtues.

Confession is so inward and spiritual a subject, that you may believe, Signora, that were you to read all that has been written upon it, and if you heard it talked of by the angels of heaven, you would not in the end know how properly to confess, if God does not first move your heart to the consciousness of your ignorance and misery, so that you humble yourself before the presence of his divine Majesty ; and enlighten your understanding and inflame your will, to a knowledge of his infinite goodness and mercy, so that you heartily believe in Christ and love Christ. I wish you, Signora, to persuade yourself of this truth, so that, when God shall touch your heart and move your will, giving you to be conscious that by your sins you have lost his grace, and generating within you a horror of them and a desire to confess them in order to return and regain his grace, being sure that you cannot know this without his grace and favour, – you then unreservedly recommend yourself to God, supplicating him to open the eyes of your understanding, so that in truth you may know yourself, and to enlighten the eyes of your soul

so that you may entirely confide in Christ and ardently love Christ. This is the first preparation you ought to make for your confession. And, as I have told you, because you must go to confession with profound humility, with firm faith and ardent charity, it is proper, Signora, that you advance to humility by the knowledge of yourself, into which you ought deeply to enter, in the manner I have already told you ; and that you go on to faith and charity by the knowledge of God, in which you will exercise yourself by the considerations which you have just before heard.

GIULIA. I should much wish you to return  
*f. 61.* *f* to repeat them if it were not so late.

VALDÉS. It will be enough that yourself when alone recall them to your remembrance. This second preparation made, I wish you, Signora, to examine well your affections, and what things incite you, whether they are of a nature that can draw you away from God. You will make this examination setting before you the law of God, understood in the manner we have discoursed upon. After this, I wish that, setting on one side these inordinate

affections that you have discovered in yourself, and the law of God on the other side, you recall to memory the exercises you have kept, the things with which you have employed yourself, the affairs you have managed, the people with whom you have kept company, the persons you have discoursed about, the books you have read in, the designs you have formed and the thoughts you have delighted in. I wish you to examine what it is that you have done, said, or thought, which may be, or can be contrary to the law of God, taking them one by one, beginning from the first day, and running down to the day when you wish to confess.

And I wish you besides, to examine what in all this time you have failed to do, say, or think that might have conduced to the honour of God, to the advantage of your soul, and to the spiritual or temporal gain of your neighbours. That as in what we sin by commission we show our iniquity and display our ill inclination towards God and towards our neighbours, so neither more nor less in what we sin by omission we declare our little faith,

our want of charity, and the small respect and love we have to God and to our neighbours; and as we have said, we are bound to love God above all things, and our neighbours as ourselves.

This preparation made, and feeling your mind already humbled by the knowledge of your own wickedness and malignity, very firm in faith and greatly warmed in charity, with the greatest horror of your sins and feeling the vexation of your appetites, you will put yourself at the feet of the confessor, yourself bearing anger against yourself and feeling the same confusion that you would have to ask forgiveness from a great prince from whom you had received the greatest favours and to whom you had shamefully committed shocking treacheries. And so with such preparation, bringing down and casting to the ground human arrogance and presumption, you will clearly and openly disclose to him everything in which you are conscious you have disobeyed God through evil intention, through ignorance, carelessness, or weakness. And if the confessor be a person who feels and relishes spiritual

things, I wish you to disclose and display to him the affections that move, incline, and carry you on to the offences and sins; because if being such a one, he will give you advice by which you may be able to mortify them.

GIULIA. I never in my life heard such a thing said, as that I must confess my affections. f. 62.

VALDÉS. If you are unwilling to confess them to the priest, confess them to God, saying with David: *Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco*, and more, *Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum, et in peccatis concepit me mater mea*, that is: "for I acknowledge my transgressions," and more, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."<sup>1</sup> And so much, Signora, as the more evils you have cause to confess while these affections live within you, so much the more and the better ought you to confess them, because you will more abase your natural pride, and you will thus exercise yourself in the virtue of humility. And be aware, Signora, that I do not wish you to be scrupu-

<sup>1</sup> Ps. li. 3-5.

lous, nor superstitious in confession, because it is sufficient to confess to the priest those things you are conscious to have done with a mind disobedient to God, about which you so much grieve; in order that, knowing you can live without committing them, you may keep a firm intention and determination never to do them again. But of failings without which we can scarcely live in this present life, that are signs of a mind not mortified, you will confess yourself continually to God, supplicating him to favour you with his grace, so that, the mortification of your old nature completed, these defects may cease in you.

GIULIA. Have I not to confess these failings to the priest ?

VALDÉS. Not by obligation, because they are not sins that belong to confession. These properly are those I told you of a little before, from which David prayed to be cleansed, calling them secret defects.

Your confession made in this manner, and your absolution received from the priest, I desire, Signora, that refreshing in your remembrance the authority that Christ gave to the



priests, saying to them: "whatsoever that ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,"<sup>1</sup> you firmly believe that God has forgiven all your sins and has restored you to his grace. But notice, that I do not wish you to think he has pardoned them for the reason because you have confessed them, for that would be to attribute to yourself what is not yours. I wish therefore that you should think that God has forgiven you, because you believe in Christ, love Christ, and have placed your hope in Christ, and that you have confessed them because God desires you to confess them.

GIULIA. I understand this well. But I wish to know from you, what is your opinion about the selection of a confessor.

VALDÉS. Because I hold it certain that a good part of the fruit of confession consists in a good confessor, to whom it belongs, not only to make absolution, but also gravely and severely to reprehend the sins, and to animate

<sup>1</sup> This was said to his *Apostles* after he had endued them with the Holy Spirit. Matt. xviii. 18. See particularly John xx. 22, 23.

him who makes the confession to the practice of the Christian virtues, and to offer proper remedies for them according to the disposition of the person, in order to overcome the inclinations and appetites that incline him to

f. 63. sin ; I wish you, Signora, to lay out all your prudence and all your authority in the selection of a suitable confessor. If such a one can be found who knows and understands by doctrine the Christian life, and who has acquired and verified by experience what he may have read in books, you ought to rank him before all others and take *him*. To such a one you may communicate your failings, for being well experienced, he will know how to give you such directions, with which, mortifying the affections, you may go onward, leaving off the defects.

And because such a person is rarely found, when you have to make choice between a learned person without experience in this Christian life, and an experienced person without learning, I wish you much rather to take the experienced one. Because in the same manner as a person will know how to

give you a better relation of the road from this place to Jerusalem who has been accustomed to travel along it, than another who knows it by cosmography, although he should know the science better than Ptolemy ; so will he better know how to introduce and guide you in the Christian journey, who has himself gone and still goes in it, than another who has read and still reads about it. This, as St. Paul says, because he does not attain to things that are of the Spirit of God, can in no manner conduct another where he has never gone himself. And because I know that it will be the better for you, I wish you to select in preference a confessor without learning, but with experience in spiritual things, if you can know of such a one, than a person with learning only : and in this so far trust me ; for there is no one blinder than he who persuades himself that he sees. And be advised, Signora, that having found a confessor experienced in this Christian road, I wish you to ask his opinion and advice in all your concerns ; and to trust him much in them all. So also it

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seems to me that from an inexperienced one you should accept nothing more than absolute. I say this, because I know by experience such confessors frequently, wishing to appear knowing, tell you of subjects not belonging to the duty of a true Christian, by which, against your will, they lead you to regard them lightly; and this is not to be considered as nothing to the object of so high a sacrament. I think you may rest satisfied with this.

GIULIA. Yes, I remain so: go on further.

VALDÉS. Of the holy communion, in which we Christians partake of the most precious body and blood of Jesus Christ our Lord, I wish to say not a little to you, because I think I should not remain satisfied even with saying much to you; but, considering that it wants little from now to the night, and that a great part of what I have said respecting confession may serve for the communion, I will pass over this briefly. And so I say, Signora, you should bring to the communion an ardent desire to unite yourself to Christ, by faith, hope, and charity. I wish you to quicken

these three virtues in your soul when you go to communion. I wish you to go grounded in humility, which you will acquire, as I f. 64. have frequently told you, by the knowledge of yourself. I would have you to go full of faith, in such manner that you firmly believe, that under these *species* exists the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. This you should think he left to us here in this world; so that whenever these *species* shall be represented to our bodily sight, we should refresh in our hearts the remembrance of his passion, through which, by means of his most precious blood, he established a new covenant between God and mankind, annulling and making void the old. And the new covenant is, that we, mankind, should believe ourselves to be justified by the blood of Jesus Christ, and that Christ justifies us, forgiving our sins. I wish besides, that you go full of confidence in the promise of Christ, very secure that this celestial food must bestow upon you great power and intrepidity to walk with resolution in the Christian course; and that it will protect and secure you from the assaults

and conflicts of your affections and sensual appetites, and thus assist in the mortification of the Old man and in the revival of the New man. For you should hold it certain that the holy communion of the most precious body and blood of Jesus Christ our Lord works all these effects in the soul, and many more. And, therefore, frequenting the communion I hold to be a laudable and joyful service, especially with persons who, having set the idea of Christian perfection before their view, have begun to walk towards it. And so I wish you, Signora, as soon as you begin to walk in this path, to begin also to frequent the communion, going always to it with the preparation that I have said.

Your alms will be in proportion to your charity, but I should rather say, that your almsgiving will be good in proportion as it will proceed from pure charity and the true love of God.

GIULIA. And will you not give me some rule that I may observe in dispensing my alms?

VALDÉS. I shall give you no other rule

than that of charity. Love God, and you will know how to dispense your alms.

GIULIA. I ask it because the Preacher said one day, that according to the order of charity, we were more under obligation to our neighbour than to ourselves.

VALDÉS. What the Preacher said is that well-ordered charity begins from God; and that in him persons learn it; both how they should love themselves, and how they should love their neighbour. And he said more: that he who lives in perfect charity frequently postpones his own individual interest for the good of his neighbour. This we see in many passages in St. Paul; who says, that charity seeketh not its own interest. As to distributing alms, St. Paul himself without any difference says: *Facite bonum ad omnes*, do good to all men; and wishing, in some respects, to come to particulars, <sup>1</sup>he says: but chiefly to *f. 65.* the household of faith.<sup>1</sup> Keeping to that which Christ says: "he that receiveth a prophet, in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receiveth a

<sup>1</sup> Gal. vi. 10.

righteous man, in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward."<sup>1</sup> Does it appear to you that these are gifts to be forsaken?

GIULIA. Rather, I have so much enjoyed to hear this, that I would die with pleasure to know some righteous person, to show him a thousand favours, and do him a thousand benefits, to be myself also righteous.

VALDÉS. A pretty contradiction is this! Do you not perceive that in this case you are moved by your own interest, and not as Christ desires, purely by his love? In short, I see, Signora, that you would be satisfied to do whatever God would command you and wish of you, provided you take care of your love for yourself; and I do not wonder, because there is nothing in the world more disagreeable than for persons to do force to themselves; so much more in things belonging to the soul where outward force and human labour are insufficient. But in short, willing or not willing, I promise you that you must give your love up to God.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 41.



GIULIA. What rudeness!

VALDÉS. Do you take it as rudeness, Signora, that God having created you, in order that you should love him, and having in so many modes and ways shown his love, he asks you to love him?

GIULIA. Let me put up with your answer. Yet if I were able to do it so readily, I promise you that I would not be slow to do it; but it is necessary to come to this effect through so many intricacies; and to tell you the truth, I do not know how you mean this. Since God commands me to give him all my love, why does he not make me certainly able always to do what I would wish for him as easily as I could give him this gown (*gonna*)?

VALDÉS. The impossibility, or, better to say, the difficulty, comes to us from original sin.

GIULIA. I cannot arrive in my mind to wish well to that Adam when I remember the evils and difficulties that he puts upon us through his sin.

VALDÉS. Turn over the leaf, Signora, and

at every turn when thinking of these difficulties and evils, you wish ill to Adam, wish well towards Christ, who by his obedience enables you to fly from the evils and difficulties in which the disobedience of Adam puts you.

GIULIA. You speak well. But as I experience the evil of Adam's disobedience, and not the good of Christ's obedience, I cannot so readily persuade myself to love Christ as I incline to wish ill to Adam.

VALDÉS. You will find also another thing more than sufficient, if you well consider it, that you can wish ill to Adam following your own will, and you cannot wish well to Christ without contradicting your own will; and to Adam you can wish ill, loving yourself, and you cannot wish well to Christ without leaving the *amor proprio* with which you love yourself. So that if you desire not to wish ill to  
*f. 66.* Adam and to wish well to Christ, put yourself to experience the benefit of Christ as you now experience the evil of Adam, and set yourself to deny your own will and leave your self-love; then you will as soon experience the good of Christ's obedience, more efficaciously

than you now experience the evil of Adam's disobedience.

GIULIA. What pertinacity you have with this Self-love and this Will! Now I assure you that I do not love myself so much as you think.

VALDÉS. I do not think that you love yourself more than as you disclose it and declare it by your words; and it appears to me that if you did not love yourself you would not wish ill to Adam.

GIULIA. Now then, I say, I do not desire to wish him ill. You go taking my words in a manner that makes me venture to say that I thought they never came from my lips.

And as from the past I have gained good fruit by your discourse, I wish nothing to be left, and so I wish you to explain one thing which keeps me much confused, and in which I find most unpleasantness, when I wish to deliberate about my entrance upon this Christian course. Let us see what success you will give me, and how you will settle it for me in the mind. The Preacher says: God only accepts those good works that we do,

moved purely by the love of God, without being moved to do them either by the fear of hell or desire and love of glory; and I certainly believe it may be so, since he says it. Now then, to tell the truth and to talk freely with you, wishing to examine my mind sincerely, I find that I should not be moved to perform anything, if it were not through fear of that hell and sometimes by the love of glory, but none from pure love to God; because I know from myself, that if there were neither Hell nor Paradise, I should pass along very well in this world, living morally and laudably in the eyes of the world in this life as I have lived until this time, without concerning myself to seek beyond it. Now then, this being so, as I truly know it to be with me, and that also being true which the Preacher says, I find by my calculation that all I shall do in this manner will be lost, since in reality I know that I am not moved to it by love to God, but by love of myself. I cannot conceive in what way you will know how to reconcile this to me.

VALDÉS. So might I drive from your mind

all your self-love, as I shall know how to settle this point.

GIULIA. To the proof!

VALDÉS. You have a slave, Signora, bought with your money, and although he is vicious, roguish, and ill-inclined, you wish him well; and in order to prevent him from putting his roguery and vice into practice, you threaten him with the galley and other severe punishments. If this slave has good sense, not to be sent to the galleys and not to be punished, understanding also that you make these threatenings for his benefit, he not only labours to restrain his vices and to conquer his evil propensities, but he begins to wish well to you. You, knowing this, begin to *f.* 67. treat him well. Feeling and enjoying the good treatment and the affection you bear to him, he begins also to serve you diligently, so that you confer honour upon him, and you bestow upon him those benefits that he wants. You do this, and in thus doing, the more you show him the love you bear towards him, so much the more the love and good-will that he has to serve you increase in him. In this

way he already abstains from vice and roguery, not through fear of the galley; nor is he diligent in your service for the sake of the good treatment you give him, but for the sake of the good-will and affection that he knows you have to him; and although there were no galleys, and although you might not treat him well, he would not cease to serve you, because he finds himself obliged by the past, and because he knows that you deserve to be served and obeyed. Now, on your part, seeing the good disposition of the slave, you make him free, giving him a charter of freedom; hence he obeys you through love and not through fear, and serves you as a freeman and not as a slave, and through gratitude and not through interest.

God behaves in this same manner towards us. Because he knows the evil disposition, the malignity, and iniquity of which we are heirs by the sin of our first parents, wishing us well by having created us, and having redeemed us by the most precious blood of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, in order that we should not put our inordinate passions in

practice, he sets hell before us. And hence arise the continual threatenings, of which the sacred Scriptures are full. Those of us who open our eyes and believe that there is a hell, and know that God will certainly do what he says in punishing our vices with the pains of hell, labour to leave off our vices not to incur the penalty; likewise because we know in some degree that God loves us. And in such case, although we are not moved by pure love, yet God seeing our obedience, further opens our eyes, so that we perceive the blessedness of Paradise. Knowing and desiring this, we begin to apply ourselves to do the will of God, so that he may give us his glory. Now God, accepting our good-will, opens our eyes still more, so that we know on one part our evil nature, and on the other his infinite goodness. With this knowledge, we begin to be enamoured with God, and to obey and serve him, not indeed through fear of hell, neither through love of glory, but solely because we have known that he is worthy to be loved, and that he infinitely loves us. Then God gives us a charter of freedom, yet

we quit not his service by having freedom; rather we are more subject and more obedient; not indeed as slaves, but as freemen; not as hirelings, but as sons. And in this consists Christian liberty. Are you satisfied  
f. 68. with this?

GIULIA. Yes, very much; and I have only one doubt remaining. What is the cause that, although many persons serve through fear as slaves, and as mercenaries through interest, they never come to serve as sons with the freedom you speak of?

VALDÉS. It is that whilst they serve as slaves, and whilst they serve as mercenaries, they consider and hold themselves to be perfect; and, seeking no other perfection, they remain always in that servitude, as St. Paul says: "for they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, by which he justifies them who believe in him, and desiring to justify themselves by their works, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."<sup>1</sup> For this cause it is necessary that you recall to your remembrance what I said: that it is proper

<sup>1</sup> Rom. x. 3.



to keep always before you the idea of Christian perfection in the manner that I have depicted, and better, if better could be. In order so to think, that you must not stop in this Christian course until you find yourself very close to it; as because always that you compare your perfection with it, you may hold yourself as imperfect, and not presume upon yourself; rather you have always legitimate cause to humble yourself; for as the evil angels lost their glory by pride, so God desires us to gain it by humility.

GIULIA. I remain indeed satisfied with this; and if you tell me in two words about Christian liberty, I will then leave you to *Go with God!*

VALDÉS. You know, Signora, that Christian liberty is a thing which, however much it is reasoned about, and however good the conduct be, can never be understood if it be not experienced; so that you will know so much of it as you experience it in your soul, and no more. If, Signora, you therefore desire to learn it, set yourself to experience it, and you will have no necessity that I should tell

you about it. But at all events, I wish to say this: that it appears according to what St. Paul says: "though I be free from all, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain them all for Christ;"<sup>1</sup> the liberty of the Christian is in the conscience, for the real and perfect Christian is free from the tyranny of the law, from sin and from death, and is absolute lord of his affections and appetites. And on the other part he is the servant of all as to the outward man, because he is subject to serve the necessities of the body, to keep the flesh subject, and to serve his neighbours according to his power, either with his faculties, if gifted with them, or with good doctrine if that be added, and with the example of a good and holy life. So that such a Christian person is free as regards the spirit, acknowledging no other superior than God, and as to the body, he is subject to everybody in the world for Christ's sake.

You have already understood, Signora, whence has arisen your confusion of mind in

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 19.

which you have lived until now, and likewise the remedy that you can use for it. You have understood whence <sup>f</sup>the contradiction arises <sup>f</sup>. 69. that you felt within you after you heard the Preacher, and in what manner you can free yourself from it. I have depicted to you the idea of Christian perfection. I have shown you twelve steps by which you will begin to walk to Christ without being seen by the world. I have satisfied you of some doubts that have occurred to you. Lastly, you have understood in what Christian liberty consists. It now remains for you directly, directly from this night, to make proof of going in those steps that I have taught you. Therefore I desire that you would tell me in the morning what you think of them. And observe, that you always pray God that he would guide and conduct you by his grace, without ever consenting to withdraw yourself from him. Because this is the way to arrive at Christian perfection, and to enjoy Christian liberty, to which when you shall become united you will be able with truth to say with the Prophet David: *Dominus regit me, et nihil mihi deerit.*

N

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*In loco pasquæ ibi me collocavit*; that is, "the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxiii.



A brief summary of what is contained in the  
whole Dialogue.

How we should understand that man is created  
in the image of God. fo. 6

In what consists the happiness of man. fo. 7

What things are considered in original sin.  
fo. 9

What is that which we Christians gain in  
baptism. fo. 9

Two effects that the preaching of the Gospel  
causes in Christian minds. fo. 10

What is the Law. fo. 11

What is the fruit of the Gospel. fo. 12

Whence arises the difficulty that persons meet  
with in the way of God. fo. 14

Five kinds or conditions of people. fo. 14

In what Christian perfection consists. fo. 17

The nature of self-love. fo. 12. 18. 33. 35. 51

The nature of the love of God. fo. 18

A brief declaration of the ten commandments.  
fo. 19

A necessary and Christian counsel upon the  
observance of the commandments. fo. 23

- A Christian and evangelical rule that comprises all the commandments. fo. 23
- A doctrine of St. John which consoles them who are not yet united to perfection. fo. 23
- Three ways in which people sin, by evil, by ignorance, and by weakness. fo. 23
- The fruits of charity according to St. Paul. fo. 26
- f. 70. f What is Faith. fo. 26
- The difference there is between faith and hope, with a comparison. fo. 28
- Division of man according to St. Paul. fo. 30
- Twelve steps to walk towards Christian perfection. fo. 31
- How we ought to know the world. fo. 33
- How we ought to know ourselves. fo. 34
- That persons should abhor themselves. fo. 35
- That to love God it is needful to know God, and that there are three ways by which we may know him. fo. 35
- One, by the light of Nature. fo. 36
- Another, by the Old Testament. fo. 36
- Another, by Christ. fo. 36
- How we ought to know Christ. fo. 37



A short and pious explanation of the creed.

fo. 39

How we ought to love God and our neighbour.

fo. 42

How we ought to have confidence in faith.

fo. 43

How we ought to be certain in hope. fo. 44

That the exercise of the Christian should be,

the mortification of the Old man and the

revival of the New. fo. 46

In what way we ought to deny our will.

fo. 46

In what way we should mortify our five senses.

fo. 48

That we are to mortify the inward affections.

fo. 48

- That we examine every night what we have  
done through the day. fo. 51

That we communicate our concerns to some  
spiritual person. fo. 52

A consideration against worldly honour. fo. 53

Another consideration against satisfaction in  
outward things. fo. 53

Consolation against tribulations and tempta-  
tions. fo. 54

- How we should guard ourselves in acquaintance with worldly persons. fo. 55
- That we must rather adorn the inward man than the outward, by a comparison. fo. 56
- The benefit we ought to draw from the Mass. fo. 57
- How, and with what mind we ought to hear preaching. fo. 58
- How we should go to the perusal of sacred Scripture. fo. 58
- What books a beginner should read. fo. 58
- The way of prayer. fo. 58
- How a Christian should fast. fo. 59
- Of confession. fo. 60
- What the confessor must be. fo. 62
- How to prepare for the communion, and who may frequent it. fo. 63
- What must be our almsgiving. fo. 64
- The order Christian charity holds. fo. 64
- How beginning to serve God through fear and through interest, we may come to serve for love; this is explained with a comparison. fo. 66
- In what Christian liberty consists. fo. 68

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

*f.* 71.

IN WHAT MANNER THE CHRISTIAN  
should study in his own book, and what  
fruit he would draw from the study  
of it, and how the holy Scriptures  
serve him as an interpreter, or  
commentary.

Proposition.

Having frequently heard you say that a Christian's proper study ought to be that of his own book, having it always open and constantly reading in it, I have wished to know what is my book, how I ought to study in it, and what advantage I shall gain from the perusal of it, in reference to my Christian knowledge. And since you, by your language, have awakened this desire in my mind, it will be but just that you should also satisfy me.

Reply.

Whilst a man studies merely in the books of other men, he becomes acquainted with the

minds of their authors, but knows not himself. Now as it belongs to a Christian's duty to know himself, to know the state of being that he possesses as a child of God through Christian regeneration, I am accustomed to say that a Christian's proper study should be in *his own Book*. For reading in this, he learns to know himself; and so much the more and the better he knows himself, so much more easily he becomes disenamoured of himself and of the world, and becomes enamoured with God and with Christ. Such ought to be your purpose in this reading of your own book. And therefore you must be advised, that in the perusal of your own book, you must not think that God will consider you such as you imagine yourself to be, but you should be convinced that he will consider you in the degree in which you stand incorporated in Christ. This rightly understood, which is of great importance, know then that I am accustomed to call my MIND MY BOOK; because in this are contained my opinions, as well the false as the true. In this I discover my confidence and my diffidence; my faith

and my unbelief; my hope and my negligence; my charity and my enmity. In this also I shall find my humility and my presumption; my meekness and my impatience; my modesty and my arrogance; my simple-mindedness and my curiosity; my resolution against the world and my deference to it; my firmness against myself and my own self-love. In short, in this is found whatever I possess of *f.* 72. good by the favour of God and of Christ, and whatever evil I have acquired by my natural depravity. THIS IS MY BOOK. In this I read at all times and every hour of the day, and there is no occupation that hinders me from this reading. Sometimes I turn to examine the opinions I entertain in the Christian concern; on what I rest them, how I understand them, and how I feel them. At other times I set myself to examine what degree of confidence I have in the promises of God; how far I depend under all circumstances upon him; and with what alacrity I put in practice what I know to be the will of God. Again, I take into consideration how firm and constant I find myself in faith in Christ, believing

myself pardoned by God and reconciled to God in Christ and through Christ. I consider whether the Christian's faith has its efficacy within me, causing me to change my natural disposition; and whether the Christian life has made me change my former state and manners; because such alteration is the Christian renovation and regeneration. At other times I reflect whether there exists in me such a desire of the coming of Christ to judgment as exists in those who, longing for it, expect it; or I imagine in what degree of liveliness this desire and reflection are found in me. I enter at other times into a very strict account with myself, examining how far I love God and Christ; whether I love him more than myself; and how far I love my neighbours, and whether I love them as well as I love myself. From these I go forward examining all my views and the purposes which move me to put them into practice; and I constrain myself not to allow myself to be deceived in any of them.

If then I perceive that I am going forward, purely directed to the glory of God and of

Christ, and to the spiritual and eternal good of my neighbours, I know that I go forward in charity. But if I see that I proceed in attachment to my own honour and my self-interest, I know that I am living without Christian love, and I at once fly for succour to Christ, bringing to my thoughts that God will require in me what [I see] in Christ. At other times, taking a general review of my religious concerns, I estimate the measure of my humility and presumption; my meekness and impatience; my humility and my arrogance and pride; my simple-mindedness and my vain curiosity; my disregard of the world and my respect to it; my firmness with myself and my self-love and sensuality. If, when making this review, I discover nothing wanting to be carried out in my conduct and intercourse among men, I go on thinking how I should behave myself under such or such a circumstance which occurred to such and such an individual. Should I then continue unwavering in confidence, firm in faith, earnest in hope, fervent in charity? How then should I be humble, tender-minded, de-

f. 73. cided<sup>s</sup> with regard to the world, not valuing its honours or its dishonours, resolved with regard to myself, not esteeming my interests nor my inconveniences, my outward enjoyments, nor my adversities?

This is the way I study in my own book. The fruit I gain from such perusal is, that I arrive at a much better knowledge of what I am and of what I am worth in myself, and what through God and through Christ; and so I arrive at a more intimate knowledge of the benefit to be received from Christ. Thus I learn entirely to mistrust myself, entertaining a much lower estimate of myself, and learn to rely unreservedly on God and upon Christ, having the highest conception of both; and I come to accept afresh the justification by Christ, in whom I know myself justified, whilst I always know myself, in virtue of myself, unjustified. And this is the consequence, that the more continually I read in this my book, so much the more the life I have by the grace of God and of Christ grows within me, and that which I have as a son of Adam becomes less. Whence it comes, that



finding always fresh things to read in this my book, and seeing how much I advance by studying it, I so much enjoy the perusal of it, that I find no time to read in the books of others. Indeed, I have closed them all; leaving open only the holy Scriptures, which I use as an interpreter or commentary, the better to comprehend my own book, passing lightly by all parts that do not serve me to this purpose.

When I wish to examine whether my opinions in the Christian faith are false or true, I go forward comparing them with those which I read those holy men held who wrote the sacred Scriptures. Considering the confidence David entertained in God, and how he referred all things to him, I know my own confidence and mistrust, and begin to renew my confidence. Reading the holy faith of those Christians of the primitive Church who were acknowledged to be justified and sanctified in Christ and by Christ, I know my own faith and my unbelief, and ask of God that he will increase my faith. Reading the parables delivered by Christ, exhorting us to stand

continually upon the watch, expecting his coming to judgment, as in the time of the Apostles that day was looked for with longing desire, I know my own hope and my negligence, and hereafter I learn to live more above myself. Reading the effects of that charity St. Paul describes, writing to the Corinthians, and of that charity which prevailed amongst the first Christians, I know my own charity and my enmity; and, ashamed of myself, I entreat God to separate me from myself and unite me to himself. Reflecting on the humility and meekness that Christ effectually demonstrated during the whole course of his life, and especially in his passion, I know my own humility and meekness, my presumption and impatience, and strongly set my affection

f. 74. upon meekness and humility. Considering also the modest and simple manner in which the Christian people lived at the first publication of the Gospel, having all things in common, and having no other thought than to know Christ crucified, I know my own modesty and simplicity, my arrogance and vain curiosity; and come to abhor all vanity, em-

bracing simplicity of life. Reading how resolutely the Apostles stood against the world, when, being seized and beaten for preaching Christ, they went forward contented and cheerful, seeing that they had suffered for Christ; reflecting how I should submit if ever I should find myself in like circumstances, I know my own firmness against the world and my regard for it, I come to desire henceforth to be more decided against it. Reading how superior Paul was to himself when he said that he had learned in all states therewith to be satisfied, good or ill, little or much; and reflecting whether I can say the same of myself, I know my denial of self and my self-love, and begin to be willing to suffer, not to deprive myself of this satisfaction and mark of perfection. Finally, comparing my affections and appetites with those I read of in the holy Scriptures, I know well how lively or how dead they are, and I desire to give them not a single day to live.

In this manner holy Scripture serves me as an interpreter or commentary, the better to study my own book and the better to under-

stand it. In this manner I comprehend whether my Christian life and my Christian self-denial correspond well or ill, little or much with my Christian faith and profession. Thus I become gainer of two things: one is, that I do not estimate myself by the opinion men have of me, whether good or ill, but by that which I entertain of myself, always referring myself to the opinion which God has of me, knowing me a member of Christ. The other is: that little by little, I go on forming my mind, reducing it by the imitation of Christ and his saints to what I know to have been in him and in them, anxiously desirous to comprehend and follow out that perfection, in which, incorporated and made a member of Christ, I am comprehended, aspiring, not for my own honour nor my self-interest, but for the glory of God and of Christ, and of the grace of his Gospel, that God may regard me as just, pious, and holy in myself, as he regards me just, pious, and holy in Christ.

You have asked me to tell you what is **MY BOOK**, and how it should be studied, and what

advantage is to be drawn from it. I have replied that MY BOOK IS MY MIND, and in the study of it when I examine what I have in it, the benefit I draw from it is, to know myself, to know God and Christ, and hence to mistrust myself and to confide in God and in Christ. *f. 75.*

I have told you how the sacred Scriptures serve me as a kind of commentary the better to understand my own book. It remains now for you, taking the course I have described, to apply your mind immediately to this most useful study, setting aside all others. If at the beginning it appear difficult and insipid, do not for this reason give it up, because I assure you that the same belongs to this study which belongs to all others you can pursue; what at the first was dry and forbidding, when advanced to the middle, becomes easy and has some pleasantness in it, and in the end is most sweet and delicious. I assure you besides, that so much greater will be the enjoyment in this than in any other study, as the benefit resulting from it is greater, which you will find if you will make the trial. It is much greater, beyond any comparison, than

all that is drawn from all other studies. They, without this, are occasions of death to the religious life, for by them human wisdom makes itself strong and valiant against the Spirit. Thus other studies tend to make man proud, this alone overturns and casts down human wisdom to the ground. It humbles man, giving him the knowledge of himself and what he is of himself, and the knowledge of God and of Christ and what he is by the favour of God when incorporated in Christ; thus it leads him to the recovery of that dignity which the first man lost, making him like to Christ and consequently like God.

To him I ever commend you, supplicating the Divine Being to send you his Holy Spirit for Master of this study; and do you ask the same for myself, and for all them who wait for glory, honour, immortality, and life eternal with Jesus Christ our Lord.

I wish to give you this advice, that if, when reading your own book, you pause for the space of a quarter of an hour in consideration of the being that you have as a son of Adam, reflecting on your mistrust, unbelief, negli-

gence in waiting for Christ, enmity towards God, your ambition, anger, arrogance, vain curiosity, regard for the world and your self-love, that you withdraw for three hours in the consideration of the being you have through Christ as a child of God, reflecting upon that in yourself which you consider to be in him. Thus will you consider your confidence, faith, hope, charity; your humility, tender-heartedness, modesty, singleness of mind; your courage towards the world and towards yourself; attributing all that you find of God's gifts in these Christian virtues in yourself, to your incorporation with Christ. It is proper that you should do this, because you should know that although it appears to you that the consideration of the being you have as a son of Adam humiliates you, it will be more useful to you to consider the being you have as a son of God incorporated in Christ; it is indeed the reverse. Because it is thus that the consideration of your own proper nature, by *f.* 76. humiliating, makes you mistrustful and weak, consequently without resolution; but the consideration of the life you have by incorpora-

tion with Christ, by humbling you much more deeply, increases your confidence and raises you much above yourself, and thus makes you careful and thoughtful. For this reason I recommend you, that passing easily from the consideration of your own human nature, you pause a long time in the consideration of the being that you have through Christ; using the consideration of your own nature to estimate better the being you have in Christ, and to know that as much as you have resigned of your own nature, so much have you recovered of the life you have through Christ. For your purpose is to change by such manner your conduct, in order that you may appear before the judgment-seat of God with great firmness and assurance, in virtue of the being you have attained unto in Christ. And thus the life that you have of yourself is no cause of shame or confusion to you, because for this is granted and bestowed upon you the Holy Spirit, sent by himself, even by Jesus Christ our Lord.



## APPENDIX



## APPENDIX

## I.

FOLLOWING up the ALFABETO CHRISTIANO by other writings for the religious instruction of Giulia Gonzaga, — the Psalms translated from Hebrew into Spanish, which have not come down to us, — Valdés presented to her his translations and familiar commentaries on Romans and the first Epistle to the Corinthians. He prefixed an instructive dedicatory epistle to his manuscript of the Epistle to the Romans addressed to her. After a lapse of some fourteen or fifteen years, the MSS. of these commentaries, much worn by use, came into the hands of his countryman, Dr. Juan Perez at Geneva, who edited and certainly printed them there, although they bear the imprint of Venice. He issued them in two small octavo volumes, in 1556 and 1557, placing the dedicatory epistle of Valdés, whilst Giulia Gonzaga was yet living, before his own preface to the Epistle to the Romans. It is also prefixed to a handsome edition of the Commentaries reprinted in 1856, just three hundred years later. Nicholas Ferrar placed a translation of it at the end of the "Hundred and Ten Considerations of John Valdesso: Oxford, 1638," 4to., which is, however, omitted in the 12mo. edition of Cambridge, 1646.

I revise it by the Spanish, and insert it here as relating appropriately to the purpose of the ALFABETO CHRISTIANO, yet it must be understood that it formed no portion of that volume when printed in 1546.

## JUAN DE VALDÉS

TO THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS LADY,  
SIGNORA DONNA GIULIA GONZAGA.

I AM persuaded, most illustrious SIGNORA, that, by the constant perusal of the Psalms of David, which I sent to you last year, translated from Hebrew into Spanish, you will have formed in yourself a mind pious, confiding in God, and referring all things to God, as David's was. Desirous now, that proceeding onward, you may form in yourself a mind perfect, firm, and constant in things belonging to the Gospel of Christ as St. Paul had, I send you these epistles of St. Paul translated from the Greek into Spanish. By the continual reading of them, I am certain that you will make great progress in spiritual edification. But this will only be, provided you read them in order to form and establish your mind according as St. Paul's was formed and established, and not for the purpose of vain knowledge or curiosity, as some

unreligious persons do, who think to put an obligation upon God by setting themselves to read St. Paul, like those who, being Spaniards, would think to compliment a Greek emperor by speaking to him in Greek.

I wish to inform you of this, that you must so far imitate David, as you know that he imitated God, and that you should copy St. Paul so far as you know that he imitated Christ. This I mention because it concerns you to become very much like Christ and very much like God, striving to recover that *image* and *likeness* of God in conformity to which the first man was created. And I am not satisfied that you should think to regain this, having only David and St. Paul before you as patterns; because at best that would happen to you which occurs to the painter who, copying a portrait drawn by another painter, not only fails to attain to the truthfulness of nature, but does not even reach to the perfection of the picture from which he drew it, or if he does so, it is as by a miracle. I say, then, that this does not satisfy me. Because I wish you to keep David and St. Paul in view as patterns only so long as your mind is not capable of taking Christ and God for your patterns. Endeavouring always to perfect yourself in what concerns piety, and in all that belongs to the Gospel, in such a manner that as your mind may become able to take Christ and God for patterns, you will come to draw your portrait to the nature of the real

image of Christ and to the very image of God, so that *your* picture may serve for a pattern to others in a similar manner that the pictures of David and St. Paul now serve for patterns to you.

And if what I say appear to you to be something new and not used in practice, know that it is not new, but that it is ancient, and was much practised, although not being understood it now appears to be new and not practised. That it was so, appears from what St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, tells them, that they are carnal and not spiritual. He says to them: "Be ye imitators of me, as I also am an imitator of Christ;" meaning, imitate me according as I imitate Christ. Here it must be understood that, had the Corinthians been spiritual, he would not have said to them: "Imitate me, draw your picture from that which I have drawn of Christ," but he would have said to them, as he said to the Ephesians who were spiritual: "Be ye imitators of God, as dear children; endeavour to recover the *image* and *likeness* of God, drawing it not from any man, but from God himself." It appears before, that Jesus Christ our Lord himself had the same object, as in one part he says: "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart," and in another: "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." You see here that in counselling you to draw the picture of the very image of Christ and of the very image of God, I tell you no

new or unpractised thing, but a thing ancient and practised by Christ himself and by his apostle, St. Paul. It remains that commending yourself to God you apply your mind to it. This you will do by imitating David so far as he imitated God, and is conformed to the *image* and *likeness* of God, having drawn his picture from God himself; and imitating St. Paul so far as he imitates Christ and is conformed to the *image* and *likeness* of Christ, having drawn his picture from Christ himself. And do not rest here, but, passing onwards, consider that you have to imitate God, drawing your picture to the life from the very image of Christ, and the very image of God. And therefore, in order to imitate Christ, and to draw your picture of Christ, the continual reading of the histories of Christ will be of much service to you, for they have much efficacy, containing many of the deeds of Christ and many of the words he spoke. In these I understand God shows much greater power, moving persons' hearts by them, mortifying them and renewing them, than in any other that are found written. I think by the favour of God to serve you with these as I have already served you with those of David and St. Paul.

And know most surely that as by reading of St. Paul the wonderful effects of the Cross of Christ are known, seen, and felt, so in the reading of the histories of Christ, is wonderfully known, seen, and felt, the

very Cross of Christ. And under this word CROSS I understand all that which was weakness and infirmity in Christ, as much in what he himself felt, enduring hunger and thirst, cold and heat, with all the other inconveniences to which our bodies are subject, and in suffering affliction and anguish for some things that he saw amongst men and in men, and fearfully feeling death, as well as in what he outwardly showed in that he was considered to be a man low, base, and common, and was treated as such, and as a man scandalous and dangerous, and as such was crucified. I will accomplish this that I say of the histories of Christ when and how it may please the Divine Majesty. Meanwhile lose no time, endeavour every day to make yourself more like God, making use of reading the Psalms of David, and more like Christ, making use of the reading of St. Paul, in which you will also see the Cross of Christ, although not so clearly as in the Gospels. And because the reading of St. Paul being commonly held to be more difficult than that of the Gospels, it may appear strange to you that I have given you St. Paul before the Gospels, I wish you to know, that according to my comprehension, there is without any doubt greater difficulty in the perfect understanding of the Gospels than the Epistles of Paul. This I conceive proceeds from various causes which would be long to relate here. I will only say this: that because I read in St. Paul



the ideas and experiences of St. Paul, and in the Gospels the many thoughts and experiences of Christ, I find so much greater difficulty in the perfect understanding of the Gospels than in the perfect understanding of St. Paul, as I conceive that the thoughts and experiences of Christ were more exalted and more divine than the ideas and experiences of St. Paul, not denying that as to the general sense, and as to the style, the Gospels may be much more intelligible than St. Paul. But respecting this I reserve to speak more at large when it may please God that I come to translate the Gospels.

In the translation I have wished to go very close to the letter, rendering it word for word as much as was possible for me to do so; and even leaving the ambiguities found in the Greek, when the text might apply in one sense or another, where I have been able to leave it so in the Spanish. I have done this, because in translating St. Paul I have not pretended to write my own conceptions but those of St. Paul. It is very true I have added some little words to the text where they appeared to me needful, but some of them are understood in the Greek text although they are not written, and others seem to be necessarily understood. All of these, as you will see, are marked, in order that you may know them for mine and use them as you please, as to whether you read them

or not. Yet be advised, that as it is not well to make of little account what God by himself may give you to understand in this reading, so neither is it well for you to trust much in your own judgment, depreciating the judgment of others. It is not well for you to undervalue your own, and it is worse for you to undervalue that of others.

In the explanations that I have written upon what I have translated, I have approached the mind of St. Paul as much as was possible to me, writing down his ideas and not my own; and if I have departed from them in anything, it has been through ignorance, and not wilfully. I shall most willingly therefore be glad to be corrected and improved in what may not have been correct, and chiefly in that which might give birth to any scruple, however small, that may arise in any Christian mind soever. For although, as you are aware, my principal object in these writings has been to satisfy your desire, yet whilst desiring to make them of use to you, I wish at the same time to benefit all those persons who may read them, nor offend the lowliest of them all in anything. This is my principal profession, because I understand the Son of God made this profession in the present life, whom I, being a Christian, am obliged to imitate. Do not think that the Spanish will serve you to understand the *words* of the Latin which I put at the head of the explanations, because frequently they do

not agree one to the other ; but consider that they only serve you more readily to understand what is the Latin to which the Spanish answers, and which, as I have said, is conformable to the Greek text and not to the Latin, because St. Paul wrote in Greek, not in Latin.

And because in certain cases you may wish to read the text of St. Paul without occupying yourself with my explanations, in order that you may do so with greater facility, I wish to inform you of some particulars which will open the way and render the knowledge of the mind of St. Paul more easy. I therefore tell you that by the word GOSPEL, St. Paul means the proclamation of the good news of the general Pardon which is published throughout the world, affirming that God has pardoned all the sins of all men in the world, executing the severity of his justice for them all upon Christ, who made known this general Pardon in the world, and in whose name all those who make it known proclaim it, in order that men, moved by the authority of Christ, who is the Son of God, may believe in the general Pardon, and confiding in the word of God may hold themselves as reconciled with God and cease to seek after other means of reconciliation. Whence you should understand that God in this case has acted and continues to act towards mankind like a prince, his subjects having rebelled and through their rebellion

fled the kingdom, who gives forth a general Pardon, and sends it to be proclaimed by his Son, in order that they may give credit to the Pardon through the authority of the Son, and thus confiding in the prince's word, they may return to the kingdom, desisting from endeavours to procure pardon of the prince in any other way or by any other means whatever. It is thus to be understood that they who believe Christ is the Son of God, and yet give no credit to the general Pardon which he published and is still publishing, not holding themselves reconciled with God, and going about seeking some other way of reconciliation, not trusting in that which Christ published and in whose name it is still proclaimed, do the same thing that the subjects of that prince do, who believing that he who publishes the general Pardon is the prince's Son, yet do not hold themselves forgiven, and therefore do not return to his kingdom.\* And I understand that neither will the prince to whom this occurs be satisfied as regards his intention in this, that he did not send his Son except with the purpose that being known as his Son, he might be believed in what he declared; nor does it appear that God is satisfied in his intention in them who, knowing Christ to be the Son of God, yet not relying upon what he proclaims on his part, do not hold themselves reconciled with God; his intent being only satisfied in them who, knowing

\* See the "One Hundred and Ten Considerations," Consid. xiii.

Christ as the Son of God, and confiding in what he proclaims on the part of God, consider themselves reconciled with God, and therefore as pious, just, and holy. It is very true that the knowledge they have that Christ is the Son of God who yet do not feel reconciled with God, cannot properly be called *knowledge*, being more properly *opinion* than knowledge. Because if it were knowledge it would produce in them the effect it produces in others, assuring them of their reconciliation with God, and giving peace to their consciences.

Besides this, you should know that by the **LETTER** St. Paul comprehends all that a man does, thinks, and speaks without being inspired by God to it, although they may be things that other men have thought, said, and done, being inspired. And by the **SPIRIT** he comprehends all that a man does, thinks, and speaks, being moved and inspired by God to it. It was the Letter in St. Paul to separate himself from the conversation of the Gentiles in Antioch, not to scandalise the Jews. And it was the Spirit in St. Paul that reprov'd him for it. Further, know that by **FAITH** St. Paul intends the belief that a man gives to the general Pardon which Christ published, and which is yet published on the part of Christ and in his name. And by **HOPÉ** he means the patience and endurance with which the believer expects the accomplishment of what he believes, without being weary of waiting,

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and without ceasing to endeavour after what he expects. And by CHARITY he signifies the most intimate affection with which the man who believes, expects and loves that which he believes and waits for; loving God and Christ, of whom and through whom he must gain what he believes, expects, and loves, loving also all things that are of God and of Christ. You should know besides, that by the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD St. Paul means the perfection of God. Thus when we wish to say of a man that he is perfect, we say that he is righteous, meaning that there is nothing in him that is not very good, and in effect wanting nothing. By the GRACE OF GOD, he signifies the favour God does to man, drawing him to accept the general Pardon, supporting him, and enriching him with other inward favours which are called graces, because God gives them gratuitously, without any regard to merits, and solely because it is his will to bestow them. By the GIFT OF GOD, he chiefly means, having given us Christ, that the severity of his justice being executed upon him, we might hold the general Pardon as certain; and he means in particular, the exterior gifts of the Holy Spirit, which in St. Paul's time were abundantly communicated to them who believed. By SIN he almost always means the inclination and appetite to sin which live in man through natural and acquired depravity; and I say *almost* always, because by sin he sometimes means the sacrifice for

sin. By the OLD MAN he signifies man unregenerated and unrenewed by the Holy Spirit ; and by the NEW MAN the man regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit.

You should also know that by the FLESH, by the CARNAL MAN, by the BODY OF SIN, and by the LAW IN THE MEMBERS he means the same as by the Old man ; which is nature without the Holy Spirit. By the LAW OF GOD, he intends that which God gave to the Hebrew people by Moses, which he sometimes calls the LAW OF DEATH, because its office is to condemn. At other times he calls it the LAW OF SIN, because it stirred up in man the inclination and appetite for sin. By the LAW OF THE SPIRIT he means Faith. By CIRCUMCISION he means that of Judaism, and by the FORESKIN he means that of the Gentiles. And lastly, understand by CHRISTIAN LIBERTY he comprehends the degree, the being, and the dignity to which God brings the man who accepts the grace of the Gospel, and who, being regenerated, renewed and made a child of God, is free and exempt from those things to which other men are subject, in so far as he maintains himself in the state of regeneration and newness of life, and does not deprive himself of the filial relationship in which he is guided and governed by the Spirit of God. All this may serve you as a guide by which you may attain to many of the things you will read in St. Paul.

And because you may be surprised to see that St. Paul setting himself to reprehend certain vices in some of those persons to whom he writes, and warning them of those vices they ought to be upon their guard against, mentions some that are shameful even in men of the world, and this appearing to you a strange thing for it to be necessary to warn Christians of such vices, while he does not touch upon the more inward vices, know then, that in St. Paul's time, because there were some who, under a plea of Christian liberty, made licence for the flesh, and gave themselves up to sin and deceitfulness, it was necessary that St. Paul should expressly treat upon that in which they most sinned. It was also necessary, at that period, to remedy in this manner those outward vices in Christian professors, because they did not look upon them as sinful, nor were they ashamed of them, through the false persuasion of Christian liberty into which they fell, and through having given up the estimation of the world. In the same manner it is now necessary to correct the inward vices of Christian persons, who, abstaining partly for sake of God, and partly for sake of the world, from outward vices, fail to overcome the inward sins, in part because they do not know them as vices, and in part because the world holds the giving up of those vices as itself a vice. You will find in St. Paul some things which you will not feel in



yourself, and you will find others you do not comprehend, and some others that will appear strange to you. It appears to me, all these you ought to pass by, not being careful to weary yourself much, in order to understand them, since the object for which you set yourself to read St. Paul is not to comprehend all St. Paul says, but to form your mind by that which God gives you to understand, and feel, and relish in St. Paul. I advise you also that when you begin to read an Epistle, you fail not to read the argument written before it, because it throws much light on the whole Epistle.

But all these advices are as nothing, and one is of more value than all of them; this is, that whenever you take St. Paul in hand, you recommend yourself to God, praying him to send his Holy Spirit, who may guide you in this reading; and seek to receive it by means of the only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

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## II.

IN the "History of the Inquisition of Spain," by Juan Antonio Llorente, it is stated that a piece found amongst the papers of Carranza, Archbishop of Toledo, entitled: "Aviso sobre los interpretes de la sagrada Escritura," was attributed to Juan de Valdés. It was said to have been written whilst residing at Naples, in the form of a letter, and that its argument was contained in the Christian Institutes of Tauler. From the evidence of his other writings, as well as from his own declaration, I have hitherto considered as I have elsewhere expressed, that he drew their contents almost exclusively from his own mind and the diligent reading of the holy Scriptures, making constant use, as he himself says at the close of his Commentary on Romans, of those his two books, PRAYER AND CONSIDERATION, in a manner which he more fully describes in the fifty-fourth of his "Hundred and Ten Considerations." These, he says, assisted him so far as his prayers had been aided by the Holy Spirit and his considerations had been helped by his experience and the daily reading of the Scriptures. Yet in the present work, besides the great stress laid upon the Christian duty of denial of Self and of Self-love, there are various passages similar to some found

in Tauler's Sermons and in his Christian Institutes. The same sentiments might not unnaturally occur to independent minds of a similar constitution when exercised upon similar topics, as for instance in the works of George Fox, William Law, and other writers. A remarkable coincidence, however, with Tauler, is shown by the manner in which the sentiments are expressed; a mode by which one thing is so evenly balanced or measured with its correspondent, that it may not inaptly be styled the *tanto quanto* manner. This may be noticed in the "Hundred and Ten Considerations," and more largely in the ALFABETO CHRISTIANO. An instance of more than usual length occurs at pages 135-6. As an illustration of this style, I append a translation of an extreme example from Tauler's Institutes\*, which Valdés might possibly have had in his mind whilst he was writing the dialogue.

#### THE ROOT OR CHAIN OF VIRTUES AND VICES.

##### CHAPTER VI.

Since, as we hold with certain faith, God Almighty is within us, yea, even nearer to us than we are to ourselves, what is the reason that we have so little

\* D. Joannis Thauleri, Opera Omnia. Paris, 1623; 4to. Institutionem, pp. 668-9.

perception of him? Because indeed his grace does not operate in us. And why does not his grace operate in us? Because in truth we do not humbly, devoutly, and earnestly desire it. Why do we not seek it with humility of heart? Because we do not love God with the whole heart and with all the senses. Why do we not love God with all the senses and the whole heart? Because we do not know him. Why do we not know him? Because we are not acquainted even with ourselves. Why do we not know ourselves? Because we do but feign to attend to our way of living and keep watch over it. Why do we not attend to the manner of our lives and keep watch over them? Because the eyes of our understanding are blinded. Why are the eyes of our understanding blinded? Because their sight is blinded with the mire and clay of these transitory things. By mire and clay I mean the inordinate love and delight of self, of the creatures of the world, of our own bodies. Why are the eyes of the understanding dimmed with mire and clay? Because we are unwilling to die to our passions and become converted with the whole heart to God. Hence the light of divine grace does not wholly operate within us.

Let us now on the other side consider the chain of Virtues. Whoever desires to become enlightened with the inshinings of grace and true knowledge contemns the love of the world and turns away from

human prudence and carnal delights. For, *as much* as I have gained of divine discretion, *so much* also, denying myself, do I love the unpleasantness of the world. As much as I love the unpleasantness of the world, so much do I obey God. As much as I obey God, so much do I rejoice in peace of mind and serenity of conscience. As much as I possess of peace of mind and of a pure conscience, so much the senses are wise and the understanding is pure. As much purity of understanding I have, so much also I know my God. As much knowledge that I have of my God, so much I walk in his holy fear. As much as I walk in holy fear before God, so much am I replenished with his love. As much as I love God, so much do I observe his precepts, laws, and doctrines. As much as I keep his precepts and laws, so much also do I avoid sinning. As much as I abstain from every sin, so much do I watch in myself. As much as I live within myself and wait in myself, so much do I also learn to know myself. As much as I advance in knowledge of myself, so much do I despise myself. As much as I think humbly of myself, so far am I from any desire of worldly honour or of any earthly object whatever. As small as my desire is for reputation or any worldly benefit, so much have I acquired of poverty of spirit. As much as I am willingly poor in spirit, so much do I abstain from sighing after those things which I have not. As

much as I restrain my wants, so much am I patient. As much as I am patient, so much also am I humble. As much as I have of humility, so much I keep myself from slighting them who slight me. As much as I forbear to slight them who slight me, so much am I poor in spirit. As much as I am poor in spirit, so far am I from following my own will. As much the less I seek my own will with any one, so much the more do I will only what God wills. As much as I desire only what God wills, so much is he willing to what I wish. And thus I am enlightened and inspired, and become one and the same in this respect in spirit with him.

But to arrive at this, a ready and unencumbered turning away from every created object is required. Man is certainly a compound of time and eternity. As much more, then, as he rests and roots in temporal things, so much farther is he removed from eternal things. These then appear little to him, as anything placed afar off, when seen from a distance, looks smaller than it is; nor can he who does this with eternity ever attain to true peace, but soon becomes blinded and lukewarm in divine love, and at the same time unsatisfied and unstable, resting on these unstable things of the world to which he turns himself.

Whoever, then, desires to stand loose and free from fault or imperfection, in the first place it is needful

for him to unburden himself of his love and affection of created things, which are fallen and transitory. Scarcely can the abundance of temporal things and the love of God exist together in the same individual. Because divine love is a fire consuming all mere temporal things, making a space for celestial and divine. The giving up of all temporal things, then, opens an entrance for those which are wholly divine and eternal.

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## III.

## GIULIA GONZAGA'S WILL.

Translated from *Raccolta Ferrarese*, tom. viii. ; *Vita di Donna Giulia Gonzaga*, scritta dal P. Ireneo Affo, pp. 147-188.

DEATH at length drawing near, and considering her former Will which had been made seven years before, she caused another to be drawn up, which is here given, not only as showing the last intentions of her virtuous heart, but also because such documents not seldom serve the inquiries of literary men in other respects.

In the name of God the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I, Donna Giulia Gonzaga Colonna, wishing to

make my Will and dispose of my property, and to arrange what I desire to be executed after my decease, — In the first place offer and commend my soul to the Lord God Almighty, my most longsuffering Father, and to Jesus Christ his Son, my Redeemer, if it be worthy to be received into eternal life. And when separated from the body, I wish and direct that this may be interred in the church of the Franciscan nunnery [Santa Chiara], where I have lived many years and reside at present :

I make and constitute the most Illustrious Vespasiano [Gonzaga], my nephew, universal heir of all my property, excepting only the underwritten legacies and bequests, annulling every other testament that I have made in time past :

I leave to the venerable convent of San Francisco, where I now reside, and to the nuns, a thousand ducats currency, and direct that they be paid in such manner and in such sums as they shall choose :

I leave to the Rev. Sister Caterina Strambone, Mother of the said convent of San Francisco, for her habit, twenty-five ducats currency :

To the Sister Aurelia Riccia, nun of the said convent, an annuity of ten ducats currency during her life :

To Sister Lucretia Longa, nun in the said convent, twenty ducats, paid at once :

To all the other nuns of the said convent of San Francisco, two ducats each, currency, paid at once :



To Sister Sciabecha, who remains in the penitentiary, an annuity of six ducats during her life :

To the Noble Gio. Battista Peres of Naples, [her *maggiordomo*] an annuity of a hundred ducats currency during his life :

To M. Federico Zannichelli of Sabbioneta, three hundred ducats currency :

To the Noble Sertorio Pepe, to aid in placing out his two daughters, six hundred ducats currency, that is, three hundred for each, and they are to be paid immediately :

I leave Cynthia, my *slave*, to the said Vespasiano, my heir, whom I direct to take her to his state of Lombardy, and when he has understood the truth of what I wished to know from her, to give her in marriage in that province with two hundred ducats currency as dowry, and to make her free and set her at liberty :

I leave to Beatrice Pisana, daughter of the Noble Gio. Antonio Pisano, physician, three hundred ducats currency, which her father is to put out on security at interest, for the time when she may be settled ; and if the said Beatrice die before she shall be settled, the money shall serve for the other daughters of the said Gio. Antonio :

To Cassandra \* \* \* \* daughter of M. Galieno, physician, although I did not undertake to settle her in marriage, two hundred ducats currency and a common bed, furnished with sheet, coverlet, and basin :

To Caterina Schiavona, my maid-servant, two hundred ducats currency, and a common bed furnished with sheet, coverlet, and basin :

To the two little Lombard girls, Livia and Margarita, whom I have already sent back to Lombardy, one hundred ducats currency to each, inclusive of what they have already had :

To the little girls who at present assist in the kitchen, their payment for the time they have served, according to the promise made to them, and ten ducats currency over and above to each of them :

To Madame Giulia \* \* \* \* lady's-maid, the payment of her salary, and fifty ducats currency over and above, paid at once :

To Lucretia Gnirfo, the payment of her salary, and twenty ducats currency over and above, paid at once :

To Giovanni Gnirfo of Salerno, my man-servant, two hundred ducats currency :

To Petrillo, whom I had brought up in my house, a thousand ducats currency. If dying before he is of age to dispose of it, I leave the half of the said thousand ducats to the father and mother of Petrillo, which, if they are not living, are to be divided amongst the kindred of Petrillo, whom I strongly recommend to my heir :

To Metello Semeone, my page, a hundred ducats currency at once :

To the Rev. Bernardino \* \* \* \* who is at the Hospital of the Incurables, the usufruct of one hundred ducats currency, during his life, and after his death the one hundred ducats are for the said hospital:

To S<sup>or</sup>. Francisca's eldest friend, ten ducats currency, paid at once:

To the eldest daughter of the gardener to the Sig. Isabella Bonifacio of Capo di Monte, ten ducats currency, if they are not before paid:

To the Rev. Don Pietro, of the Incurables, ten ducats currency, paid at once:

To Lelio Cristofani, thirty ducats currency, paid at once:

To the Chaplain at present in my service, twenty ducats currency, paid at once, besides his appropriate salary:

To Madama Antonia \* \* \* \* lady's-maid, the payment of her salary, and twenty ducats currency besides:

I beg that Tiberio del Cagnino be recommended to Vespasiano, my heir, and that he will for my love present him with some gratification:

To the Noble Gio. Vincenzo, Abbot, thirty ducats for a mourning cloak:

I leave to M. Honorato Rosso, brother of Catarina Rosso, formerly my maid, three hundred ducats currency; that is, one hundred ducats for him and one

for [each of the two] children, on account of the said Catarina's services :

To the heir of the Noble Donato Antonio Altomari, physician, fifty ducats currency :

To Camilla Altomare, daughter of the said Donato Antonio, fifty ducats currency :

To the present Confessor of the Nuns of the said Convent of San Francisco, for a cloak, twenty ducats currency, paid at once :

To all my house-servants, their expenses for one month :

I order that none of my men-servants or maid-servants may be pressed or constrained by law, or in court, or otherwise, to give account of what money they have used, or of anything they have managed, and I free and absolve them, and order that they may not be molested on any account :

Item, that all my debts and legacies be paid without suit and without any delay; and that all the men and maid-servants be paid to the last day they shall have served, besides the legacies that I have left to them :

I beg the most illustrious Signora, Donna Anna de Arragon, that she pray to our Lord for me :

I leave to the Hospital of the Nunciata at Naples, fifty ducats currency at once; to the Hospital of the Incurables, another sum of fifty ducats; to that of the Converts, another fifty ducats; to the Monte della Carità, another fifty ducats :

To the most illustrious Signora, Donna Isabella Colonna, Princess of Sulmona, three hundred and fifty ducats currency, paid at once, instead of a certain chalice and patena, and certain pearls and a silver basin that descended to my possession from her mansion, which may amount to this sum :

To the reverend Suora Lodovica Maura de Gonzaga, my sister, nun at Mantua, an annuity of twenty gold crowns during her life, to be paid quarterly :

To the Noble M. Marino Spinello, physician, fifty ducats currency :

To the Noble Gio. Antonio Pisano, physician, another sum of fifty ducats currency :

To the heir of a certain person settled at Paliano, whose name Signor Scipione dell' Offredo will recollect, one hundred ducats currency, paid at once, and I request that diligence may be used to discover the said heir.

If ever any person be found who may have given me offence in any manner whatsoever, I freely pardon him, and bind my heir not to make any resentment ; I also order and bind my said heir that he use no constraint or resentment towards the said Cynthia, nor am I careful that he should learn from her what I wished to know as I have said before, but that he may make her free and set her at liberty, and give her in marriage in the province of Lombardy, as I have said before.

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I make his Excellency Signor Ascanio Caracciolo of Naples and the Noble U. J. D. Gio. Vincenzo, Abbot of Naples, executors of this my present Will, to whom I give all power in the most ample form.

GIULIA DE GONZAGA COLONNA.

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IV.

DEATH OF GIULIA GONZAGA.

From *Raccolta Ferrarese*, tom. viii. ; *Vita di Giulia Gonzaga*, p. 188.

\* \* \* “But not to turn from my subject,” says Ireneo Affo, “and not to separate from Giulia, it is proper for me finally to relate how she, who was affectionately nursed [in her sickness], piously departed on the 19th of April, 1566 ; that is, on Friday the octave of Easter, which in that year fell on the 14th of the month. It may be conceived with what tender devotion she prepared for such a passage, daily remembering so solemn a period, for she possessed the faculties of her mind sound and free to the latest sigh.” Of all this we are assured from an original letter written at the time by Gio. Battista Perez [Giulia’s *maggiordomo*] to Vespasiano Gonzaga, her

nephew and heir, which runs in these terms: "It appears to me that I should fail in my duty, as a servant for twenty-one years together, towards the deserving memory of the illustrious lady, my Lady Donna Giulia de Gonzaga, your aunt, if I did not offer to condole with your Excellency on her death.

\* \* \* "Her Illustrious Ladyship died, as you will have heard by letter from Magnifico Modignano, and from M. Federico Zanichelli, to-day, between the 21st and 22nd hour. She made an end in conformity with her most holy life, continuing throughout sensible to the latest instant when that sainted spirit left the body. Her Will has been opened, and, as you may have learnt from the before-mentioned Modignano and Zanichelli, your Excellency is left absolute heir of her property, deducting certain legacies, the Will being very different from another she had executed seven years ago."

Perez adds to his letter a copy of the will from which I have transcribed this, and a statement of Donna Giulia's income, from which it appears that, deducting the legacies, there would remain for the heir 30,000 ducats of annual income.

Affo concludes with these remarks: "This brief but true life of so famous a princess might perhaps have been graced with other details, if I had known what has been written upon the subject in another memoir which is preserved among the manuscripts of Dr.

Giuseppe Valletta of Naples. (See *Giornale de' Letterati*, tom. xxiv. p. 92.) Yet I have succeeded in compiling this, omitting other eulogiums passed on Giulia by various writers, among whom I ought not to omit to mention Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, canto xlv. st. 8, &c. Whoever will undertake to glean this field of literature will certainly not find it one barren of noble subjects; and the labour undertaken might become honourable."

We can scarcely do less than recall this sentiment expressed by Affo, some eighty years ago, and by reprinting the *ALFABETO CRISTIANO* we have endeavoured to contribute what was in our power towards the object he desired.



# INDEX.

	Page		Page
ALFABETO CHRISTIANO, how		GIULIA GONZAGA : —	
discovered . . . . .	vii	attends the evangelical ser-	
preserved and printed by		mons (of Ochino) at Na-	
Carnesecchi (?) . . . . .	xv. xviii	ples xxxvi. 12, 15, 35, 44,	
translated from the MS.		89, 181	
of Valdés into Italian by		reads the New Testament	
Marco Antonio Magno	4	in Italian . . . . .	29
written for Giulia Gonzaga		how she may conceal her	
and her friends only . . . . .	5, 6	change of views, 93, 129, 148	
to be used as a grammar		her death; buried in the	
to learn the rudiments		church of Santa Chiara . . . . .	236
of Christian perfection . . . . .	6, 7	her Will . . . . .	235
the aliment of the Perfect			
found in the Scriptures			
alone . . . . .	7, 8	VALDÉS, ALFONSO DE. Alfonso	
similarity in manner to Tau-		and Juan, twin brothers,	
ler's <i>Institutes</i> xlviii. 135, 230		sons of Hernando de	
editions of . . . . .	xli	Valdés, regidor of Cuenca	
		xxi. xxiv-v	
GIULIA GONZAGA, birth, mar-		his official publications in	
riage, widowhood . . . . .	lv. lvi	defence of the emperor	
her motto and emblem lvii. lxxxi		xxviii. lxxii	
escape from corsairs . . . . .	lviii	acknowledges himself the	
her portrait . . . . .	lix. lxxxii	author of the dialogue on	
Hippolito de' Medici, to	lxxxii	the sack of Rome, 1527 . . . . .	xxx
resides in Naples, 1535 xxxvii. lx		religio-political dialogues xxviii	
suit between herself and		recommends his brother	
Isabella . . . . .	lx	Juan to Sepulveda at	
directs the education of her		Rome, 1531 . . . . .	xxxii
nephew Vespasiano . . . . .	lxiii	Sepulveda to Alfonso . . . . .	xxii
friendship with Valdés . . . . .	11	accompanies the Emperor to	
his epistles dedicatory ad-		Germany, 1529 . . . . .	xxxii
dressed to her . . . . .	5, 216	visits Melancthon; Confes-	
friendship with Carnesecchi		sion of Augsburg . . . . .	xxxii
xvi. lxiv		disappears after the Diet of	
		Ratisbon, 1532 . . . . .	xxxii

	Page		Page
VALDÉS, JUAN DE, in the household of Adrian VI.	xxvi	ABSOLUTION . . . . .	76
believed to be the author of the <i>Diálogo de la Lengua</i> . . . . .	xxxiv. lxxiv	Body and Spirit . . . . .	86-8
cause of his leaving Spain .	xxix	Catholic Church . . . . .	114
arrives at Naples, 1529, goes to Rome, returning again to Naples .	xxxiv	Christian liberty . . . . .	191
letters of Erasmus to .	xxiv. xxv	Christian perfection, twelve steps to . . . . .	81, 89, 125-6
attends the sermons of Ochino (?) at Naples	xxxvi. 5	Confession . . . . .	169
his influence at Naples	xxxv-vi. lxxvii	Confessor, choice of . . . . .	176
manner of his religious teaching .	xxxvii. xxxix	Creed . . . . .	110
assists Giulia Gonzaga in her affairs . . . . .	14	Curious books . . . . .	92, 155
alludes indirectly to her suit with Isabella .	46, 62-3	Daily examination . . . . .	97, 127
his opinion of her .	47, 140	Faith . . . . .	74, 78, 80
list of his known writings	xl-xlvi	Fasting . . . . .	168
acquainted with Tauler's <i>Institutes</i> (?) . . . . .	xlvi. 230	Friars and non-friars . . . . .	50, 52
his epistles to Giulia Gonzaga . . . . .	5, 216	Gospel, a general pardon . . . . .	223
his orthodoxy; not a Lutheran . . . . .	xlx	Image and likeness of God . . . . .	16, 17, 110
death and character . . . . .	liii	Internal voice . . . . .	23, 41, 135-6
		Law and Gospel . . . . .	30-36
		Mass . . . . .	159
		Prayer . . . . .	164
		Rules of a Christian life . . . . .	56-66
		Self-love . . . . .	36, 99, 129, 146, 185
		Superstitious ceremonies . . . . .	158
		times and places . . . . .	127
		Three ways of knowing God . . . . .	104
		Self-examination . . . . .	145, 201
		Self-knowledge . . . . .	96-100
		Worldly honour and regard . . . . .	149-151

*Correspondence of the "ALFABETO CHRISTIANO" with the  
"CX. CONSIDERATIONS."*

Christian Alphabet . . . . .	page	7, 125, Consideration	xxxii
Crossing a river . . . . .	"	49, 80, "	iii
Divinity of Christ . . . . .	"	9, 106, "	cix
Image and likeness of God . . . . .	"	16, "	i
Physician . . . . .	"	157, "	xx
Slave . . . . .	"	187, "	xxiv

THE END.

# ALFABETO CHRISTIANO

SCRITTO IN LINGUA SPAGNUOLA

PER GIOVANNI DI VALDES.

E DALLO STESSO MANOSCRITTO AUTOGRAFO RECATO NELL' ITALIANO

PER MARCO ANTONIO MAGNO.

ORA RISTAMPATA FEDELMENTE LA VERSIONE ITALIANA

PAGINA PER PAGINA,

CON L'AGGIUNTA DI DUE TRADUZIONI,

L'UNA IN CASTIGLIANO, L'ALTRA IN INGLESE.

"VALDESSIO HISPANUS SCRIPTORE SUPERBIAT ORBIS."



LONDRA. L'ANNO MDCCCLX.

*(Non pubblicato)*

*Farò adunque, come fare sogliono i maestri di scuola  
a i loro fanciulletti, quando da prima vanno ad  
imparare. Gli propongono, dico, auanti l'alfabeto.  
E così farò io verso di te. Ti proporrò prima  
un ALFABETO SPIRITUALE.*

VITA DI GIO. TAULERO.

*Et voglio sgannarvi in questo, che io non vi dò  
queste regole, perche stiate legata ad esse, perche  
la 'ntentione mia è, che non <sup>vi</sup>serviate di loro, se non  
come d' uno ALFABETO CHRISTIANO per mezo del  
quale possiate venire alla perfettione christiana.*

VALDÉS, fo. 44vto.

ALPHABETO  
CHRISTIANO,

CHE INSEGNA LA VERA  
VIA D'ACQVISTARE  
IL LVME DELLO SPI-  
RITO SANTO.



*Stampata con gratia et priuilegio.*

*l'Anno M. D. XLVI.*

## ALLA ILLVSTRISS. SIGNO-

*ra la S. Donna Giulia Gonzaga sua pa-  
drona Marco Antonio Magno.*

*auendo letto il Dialogo in lingua Caste-  
H ghiana c' hà il titolo d'Alphabeto Christia-  
no, composto da persona, che nō hà vo-  
luto gloria di nome, et halla acquistata di fatti,  
mouêdo il lettore alla pietà christiana piu, che altra  
cosa, ch' io leggessi giamai, mi è parso per piu ac-  
cendermi a seguire il vero cammino di Christo, ch' e-  
gli ci insegna, riducerlo in lingua nostra Italiana  
quanto piu chiaramente hò saputo, non curando  
(pur che sia inteso) d' altre osseruationi di parlar  
Thoscano, ma solamente d' usare quasi l' istesse pa-  
role, c' hà vsato l' Autore. Et così a V. S. Il-  
lustriss. mando la effigie di se medesima, accioche  
vegga se io hò così ben saputo farla ragionare in  
lingua sua, come il compositore dell' opra l' hà in-  
dutta con così diuini ragionamenti allo amore del-  
lo Spirito Santo.*

ALLA ILLVSTRISSIMA  
SIGNORA LA S. DON-  
NA GIVLIA GONZAGA.

*forzato dal cōmandamento di V. S. Illustriss. fuor d'ogni mia opiniõe, hò scritto in Dialogo tutto quello ragionamento christiano, nel quale l'altro di tornando dalla p̄dica tanto ci inebbriammo, che fu necessario, che la notte il conchiudesse. Et se ben mi ricordo, non manca cosa veruna di quante là si ragionò, ne ci è cosa, che quì nō sia stata esaminata. Leggalo V. S. quādo haurà tempo, et se alcuna cosa mancherà, et se altra ne trouerà souerchia, et se nuouamente le si offerirà, che replicare intorno a ciò, ch'è stato detto, auertamene, però che aggiūgendo l'uno, et togliendo l'altro, alla fine il Dialogo resterà assai conforme alla sua volontà. Poi che la intentione mia è stata solamente di giouare, et sodisfare a V. S. Et questo potrà seruire per risposta tanto alle persone, che veggēdo questo Dialogo, lo terranno per molto stretto, et rigoroso, come a quelle, alle quali parerà ch'ei sia alquanto libero et licentioso, non considerando che io non lo ragionai con loro, ne lo scrissi per loro, ma solamēte con V. S. et per V. S. et insieme per tutte quelle persone, che in suo nome, et come di cosa*

Aii

sua si vorranno valere, et seruire di lui. Da V. S. voglio solamēte due cose in remuneratione della fatica, c' hò pigliato questi dì in scriuere questo. L' una è, che non dia piu fede, ne piu credito a ciò, che quì leggerà, di quanto le parerà, et giudicherà, che sia fondato nella sacra scrittura, et che sia inuiato et dirizzato alla perfetta charità christiana, che è il segno, nel quale Christo vuole, che i suoi christiani tra tutte le persone del mōdo siano conosciuti, et differentiati. L'altra è, che di q̄sto Dialogo si serua, come si seruono della grammatica i fanciulli, che imparano la lingua latina, in maniera che lo pigli, come vno alphabeto christiano, nel quale si imparano i principij della perfettione christiana facendo istima, che imparati questi, ha da lasciare l' alphabeto, et applicare l' animo suo a cose maggiori, piu eccellenti, et piu diuine. Questo cōuiene, che faccia V. S. come le dico, tanto per vtilità sua, quanto per segurtà mia. Però che facēdo così, ne io sarò caduto nello errore, che cadono quelli, liquali vendono le loro scritture, et imaginationi al medesimo prezzo, che vendono la sacra scrittura, doue molto piu nucono, che giouano, ne V. S. cadrà nello inconueniente, nel quale cadono le persone, che con vna santa semplicità senza pēsare piu innanzi s' applicano a leggere nelle scritture de gli huomini. Alle quali molte volte interuiene, che trouādo in quelle il latte della dottrina delli principia-



ti, pigliano tanto sapore in quella, che persuadendosi di potere aggiungere con sola quella alla perfettione christiana, nō curano d' andare a cercare il cibo delli perfetti, ilquale solamente si truoua nelle diuine scritture. Percioche esse sole di tale maniera s' accōmodano alla capacità di cui le legge, che al principiante danno latte, et al professo danno il cibo conforme al suo profitto. Donde nasce, che tali psona dependenti dalle scritture de gli huomini, et con quelle legate sempre si restano imperfette, anchor che molte volte si giudichino, et tengano p pfettissime. Onde desiderando io, che V. S. non si tenga mai ne giudichi p pfetta, et che in verità sia ne gli occhi di Dio, et del mondo, voglio, che non si legghi a questa scrittura, ne la tenga in piu stima di q̃llo, che si deue tenere vna scrittura d' un huomo. Ilquale desideroso di giouarle in questo negocio christiano, le dimostra il camino, p lo quale potrà arriuare à Christo, et vnirsi con Christo. Et voglio, che la sua intentione sia fare Christo pacifico possessore del cuor suo, di tale maniera, che egli regga, et gouerni assolutamente, et senza contradictione alcuna tutte le cose sue. Et quando V. S. haurà fatto q̃sto, creda a me, che nō si sentirà necessità di cosa veruna, di quante in questa presente vita le potranno dare intiero, et vero riposo et contentezza. Imperoche il medesimo Christo la collocherà, et porrà ne gli amenissimi pasti della cognitio-

Aiii

*ne della sua diuinità, nelli quali quieta, et riposatamente dormirà, et riposerà. Et quando io vedrò, et conoscerò V. S. in questo glorioso stato, certo, et securo del suo profitto spirituale, non dubiterò di credere, che la mia intentione in questa scrittura è stata tutta christiana, et che l'animo col quale V. S. l'ha letta, è stato discreto, humile, et puro. Iddio nostro Signore lo faccia conforme a quello, che V. S. Illustriss. hà bisogno, et a quello, che io, come suo affettionatissimo seruidore continuamente desidero.*

# ALPHABETO CHRI- STIANO. G. V.

*T* engo tanta segurtà nell' amistà nostra, che mi pare di poter liberamente cōmunicare con voi anche quelle cose, le quali a pena si discuoprono al cōfessore. Imperò volēdo hora farui partecipe d' alcune, nelle quali mi vā piu che la vita, vi priego, se nō hauete cosa, che molto u' importi in altro luogo, che siate cōtento d' udirmi attentamente ciò, ch' io vi voglio dire. Et mirate, che se non pensate di stare molto attento per tenere il pensiero altroue, ditelomi liberamente, pciocche q̄sto potrò io lasciare p vn' altro di. V. Anzi io Signora riceuo mercè di quello, in che mi cōmandate, ch' io stia. Et già sapēte, che non tengo negocij, che mi possano impedire, massimamente in ciò, che tocca al seruitio vostro. G. Hora lasciando da parte le rhetoriche vane, et le cerimonie inutili, lequali trà noi sono souerchie, voglio, che sappiate, che io p l' ordinario viuio tanto scontenta di me medesima, et similmente di tutte le cose del mōdo, et tātō suogliata, che se vedeste il cuor mio, son certa, che m' hareste compassione, percioche in lui non trouereste se non confusione, perplessità, et inquietudine. Et questo et piu et manco, se-

Aiiii

## ALFABETO

*condo le cose, che mi s' offeriscono. Ma nō sento mai tanta bonaccia nell' animo mio, che volēdo far conto con lui, possa finire d' intendere, che ciò, ch' io vorrei, che cosa gli sodisfarebbe, o cō quale si cōtenterrebbe. In modo, che nō posso pensare, che cosa mi si potesse offerire il dì d' hoggi, che bastasse a togliermi q̄sta confusione, et acchetarmi q̄sta inquietudine, et risoluermi questa perplessità. Di q̄sta maniera, ch' io vi dico, sono già molti anni, ch' io viuo, nelli quali (come sapete) mi sono interuenute tâte cose, che basterebbono p̄ alterare vno spirito acchetato, tanto più p̄ inquietare, et confondere vno animo suogliato, et cōfuso, come è il mio. Oltra ciò sappiate, che nelle prime prediche, le quali vdiij dal nostro predicatore, mi persuadette con le sue parole, che p̄ mezzo della sua dottrina io potrei serenare, et mettere in pace l' animo mio, ma fin hora mi è auenuto al rouescio di q̄llo, che io pensaua. Et ben che io attribuisca più q̄sto ad imperfettione mia, che a difetto suo, tutta via mi da pena il vedere, che la mia sperāza nō mi habbia succeduto, et auenga che q̄sto fusse tollerabile, nōdimeno il male è, che in luogo di sanare d' una infermità, son entrata n vn' altra senza essere uscita di q̄lla. Questa è vna grādissima, et crudelissima cōtradittione, che sento dentro di me tanto noiosa, et fastidiosa, che p̄ mia salute molte volte mi vëgono le lagrime a gli occhi, p̄ nō sapere, che far di me, ne a cui m' appoggiare. Questa cōtra ittiōe*

*hanno ingenerato nell' animo mio i sermoni del perdicatore, mediāte li quali mi veggio fortemente cōbattuta. Da vna parte dal timore dello 'nferno, et dallo amore del paradiso, et dall' altra dal timore delle lingue delle genti, et dallo amore dell' honor del mōdo. Di modo che duo timori, et duo amori, o p dir meglio duo affetti di timore, et aliri<sup>1</sup> duo d' amore sono q̄lli li quali cōbattono in me, et mi tēgono tale alcuni di sono. Che se voi sentiste quel, ch' io sento, vi merauigliereste, com' io lo possa passare et dissimulare. Questo è ciò, che si truoua in me, et in q̄sto stato ch' io u' hò detto male, o bene, come hò saputo, stāno le cose mie. Et poi che voi hauete mostrato tāta affettiōe, et volōtā d' aiutarmi nelle cose esteriori, vi priego siate cōtento d' aiutarmi, et cōsigliarmi in q̄ste interiori, poi ch' io sò molto bene, che se uoi uolete, hauete piu parte d' aiutarmi in q̄ste, che nelle altre. V. Dite Signora liberamente tutto q̄llo, che volete di me, et potete essere certa, che tutto ciò, che io potrò, et saprò, spenderollo in vostro seruitio sempre. G. Con questa cōfidenza sono entrata con voi in questo ragionamento, sopra del quale primieramente voglio, che voi diciate, donde credete, che nasca la confusione, dubbio, et p̄plessità, che gia tāto tempo sento nell' animo mio, et se pensate, che si potrebbe rimediare, et che mezo si potrebbe tenere per ciò. Et detto questo, mi direte intorno alla cōtradittione, che m'è nata dapoi che intendo queste predi-*

<sup>1</sup> altri (?).

## ALFABETO

*che, se sarebbe possibile per alcuna via acquetarla, o per accordo, o veramente p contesa, pche di nessuna maniera è possibile poter durare molto in qsta tempesta d' affetti, d' appetiti, d' imaginationi, et di diuersità di voluntadi, et non voglio, che p diate tempo in iscusarui con le solite, per non dir finite <sup>1</sup> humilitadi, che in tale caso molte volte si sogliono usare. V. Anzi sēza piu pensare, subito darò principio. Nientedimeno vorrei prima, che voi mi promettete una cosa. G. Che cosa? V. Che se io vi faccio capace della verità, donde procedono la vostra cōfusiōe, la inquietudine, et la cōtradittione, et ui mostro la via, p laquale vi potrete liberare dall' una, et dall' altra, mi diate la fede vostra, et parola, che camminerete p quella. G. Se così foss' io certa, che voi farete ciò, che dite, come son certa, che in tale caso io farò, ciò, che mi dimādate, gia incominciarei ad acquetarmi. V. Horsu io spero nō tanto nella habilità, o sufficienza mia, quāto nella affettione, et nella uolontà, ch' io tengo di seruirui, et similmente nel vostro uiuo ingeno, et chiaro giudicio, et sopra tutto nella gratia di Dio, che innāzi, ch' io mi parta di quì non solamente saperete ciò che desiderate, ma intenderete et conoscerete il camino, p lo quale vi potrete liberare dalla antica infermità, et dalla accidētale. State Signora attēta, pche sopra ciascuna cosa, delle quali io vi parlerò mi replichiate quello, che u' occurrerà. G. Così lo farò. V. Accioche intendia-*

<sup>1</sup> finte (?).

*te Signora donde procede il trauaglio et cōfusione, c' haruete detto sentire già molt' anni, voglio che torniate alla vostra memoria come l' huomo è fatto ad imagine et somiglianza di Dio. G. Datemi ad intēdere che cosa è questa imagine et somiglianza di Dio. V. Anzi voglio che San Paulo la vi dichiari, et così lo 'ntenderete per quello, che dice alli Colocensi, doue ammonendogli, che contrattino la verità l' uno con l' altro, li consiglia, che p ciò si dispoglino del vecchio huomo, con tutte le loro opre, et li loro affetti, et che si vestano del nuovo huomo, ilquale si rinuoua mediante lo conoscimento di Dio, et conforme alla imagine et somiglianza di quello, che lo cred. Et anchora lo 'ntēderete p quello che dice l' istesso san Paulo a quelli d' Efeso, portando loro in memoria, che con essere christiani hanno imparato a dispogliarsi del vecchio huomo: et rinouarsi spiritualmente: et vestirsi del nuouo huomo, ilquale è creato alla imagine et somiglianza di Dio. Per la qual cosa pare, che in tūto l' huomo cōserua et guarda in se la imagine et somigliāza di Dio, in quāto uede, conosce, et intēde, et gusta le cose spirituali, uiuendo et conuersando spiritualmente. Saputo q̄sto, et esaminato, che cose sono quelle, che ponete innāzi al vostro animo, intenderete chiaramente come tutta la inquietudine: et tutto il trauaglio: et tutta la cōfusione, che sentite, procede, perche il vostro animo vorrebbe, che voi procuraste di restituirgli la ima-*

*Huomo  
mo ima-  
gine di  
Dio.*

## ALFABETO

*gine di Dio, alla quale fù creato, et della quale pare che l'abbiate priuato, ubedendo a gli affetti vostri, et voi pseuerādo in cassare questa imagine, gli ponete innanzi cose trāsitorie et terrene, et nō p niente degne di quella eccellenza, p la quale fù creato. Et per ciò non si può sodisfare, ne contentare con nessuna di quelle, et pare a voi, che egli non sappia ciò che si vuole. Et è p ciò, che voi nō gli sapete porre innāzi quello, che vorrebbe. Questo medesimo, che interuiene a voi, è interuenuto sempre alle persone del mōdo, che sono arriuate ad ingegno speculatiuo, et chiaro giudicio, lequali conoscēdo in verità, che gli loro animi nō trouauano, ne poteuano trouare nelle cose corporali intiera sodisfattiōe si diedero a cercarla nelle cose, che appartengono all' animo. Nōdimeno come mācava loro il lume soprannaturale, col quale solamēte si truoua, vede, et conosce la verità, cōtinuamēte andarono peregrinādo in diuersità d' opinioni, et di pareri. Et così alcuni cercauano la felicità in vna cosa, et altri in altra. Le quali nō curerò di referirleui quì, pche nō sono a vostro proposito. Basta che sappiate q̄sto, che essi tutti s' ingānarono, et nō mai poterono ombreggiare, non che andare al segno delle cose, nelle quali cōsiste la vera felicità, li quali se hauessero hauuto vn poco di lume di fede, ageuolissimamēte, et con la gratia di Dio l' haurebbono acquistata, et così haurebbono acchetati, et paceficati li loro animi. Hauete inteso la*



*cagione, donde procede la vostra inquietudine, cōfusione, et trauaglio? G. Si molto bene. V. Adunque hora sapete, che si puote molto bene remediare, et che il remedio stà in mano vostra. G. In mia mano? V. Si in vostra mano, pche sempre che voi vogliate disponerui a far q̃llo, ch' io vi dico, et che dice Sā Paulo quāto al rinouare, et al ristaurare in voi la imagine, et somigliāza di Dio, trouerete la pace, la quiete, et lo riposo dell' animo. G. Et come hò da far q̃sto? V. Scostādo l' animo vostro da le cose caduche, et trāsitorie, et applicandolo alle stabili, et eterne, nō volendo, ne procurando pascerlo con cose corporali, ma spirituali, non pascēdolo di cose mondane, ma di cose celestiali. Et in questo modo trouando l' animo vostro il vero pasto, et vedendosi vestito di quell' huomo nuovo, alla imagine del quale, et somigliāza fù creato, viuerà sēpre allegro, et contento, et quì in questa vita incomincierà a gustare della felicità, della quale spererà ppetuamēte di godere nella vita eterna, essēdo così che la felicità dell' huomo cōsiste in conoscere con lume di fede Iddio p X̃po, Felicità dell' huomo. et nella vnione dell' anima con Dio, mediāte la fede, sperāza, et charità. Allaquale felicità solamēte arriua il vero christiano. G. Io crederei ben questo, che dite, pche in uero mi pare fondato in ragione, ma conoscendo io molte persone, le quali tenēdo tanto, et anche forse piu cassata l' imagine di Dio, che la tengo io, et non presentando a*

## ALFABETO

Côpa-  
ratione.

gli loro animi cose piu spirituali, che io presento al mio, viuono a piacere: et ritrouano contentezza: et sodisfattione nelle cose di q̄sto mondo, nō sò ciò, che io mi creda. V. Coteste tali p̄sone terrāno gli animi bassi, et plebei: et p̄ ciò si darāno pace di cose basse, et plebee. Ma vn animo gentile et generoso, com' è il vostro, nō puote acchetarsi, ne riposarsi, saluo se con q̄lla dignità, p̄ la quale fu creato. Per tanto ritorno a dire, che se state suogliata: et se uiuete in cōfusione, è p̄che nō volgete l' animo vostro alle cose spirituali: et diuine: et perche lo tenete sempre nella contēplatione di q̄ste cose basse et trāsitorie. Questo intenderete meglio p̄ questa cōparatione. Partono due p̄sone di quì p̄ andare in Spagna, dellequali la vna è tātō trascurata, et smemorata di se stessa, che se nel viaggio le accade alcuna cosa piaceuole, et diletteuole, nō solamente la piglia, et di lei gode, ma dimenticato lo suo principale viaggio, col corpo et cō l' animo gioisce, et si ritiene in q̄lla. Et l' altra per lo cōtrario è tanto sollecita, et accurata, che con tutti li spassi, et feste che le siano offerte, p̄che sà, et è certa, che non hà da firmarsi là, nō le gusta, ne si diletta di q̄lle, anzi molte volte le sono fastidiose, et noiose, considerādo, che elle sono impedimento et disturbo p̄ lo suo principale camino. Et questa tale p̄sona all' hora terrà māco sodisfattione di q̄ste cose, quando haurà piu impresso nella memoria il suo principale viaggio, et quātūque alle volte si dimē-

*tichi di se medesima, et si dimētichi del suo uiaggio, tuttauia le resta impresso nella memoria vn non sò che, che la fà, nò trouar gusto in cosa veruna di q̃lle, che nel viaggio le s' offeriscono. Di q̃sta medesima maniera siamo noi p̃sone in q̃sta uita, le quali tutti nasciamo, et fummo create, p̃ conoscer Iddio, et credere in Dio, et amare Iddio, et da poi nell' altra vita godere di Dio. Nientedimeno sono alcune, lequali pasciute d'e piaceri di questo mōdo, nò solamente si diletmano, et si dāno pace in q̃lli, ma totalmente si dimenticano dell' altra vita, p̃ la quale furono create. Et sono anchora altre, alle quali essendo offerto i medesimi dilette, et piaceri, non gli gustano, ne pigliano sapore di quelli, anzi molte volte loro sono fastidiosi, et insipidi, tenendo sempre la intentione all' altra vita, per la quale Iddio le cred. Et benche dimenticate vn qualche tempo di se stesse, perdano la memoria dell' altra vita, perche Iddio stà sempre alla porta et chiama, sarà impossibile, che trouino gusto, ne sapore nelle cose di q̃sta, et se penseranno o procureranno di trouarlo, viueranno nella confusione, et nel fastidio, et nella inquietudine, che voi Signora viute. Di maniera che, poi che q̃llo, che sà ben godere di q̃sto mōdo, se ne gode nò come di cosa propria, ne che gli habbia da durare, ma come si gode il curioso, et sollecito viādāte delli spassi, et feste, che gli s' offeriscono nel camino, sò di parere, che voi Signora facciate il medesimo, tornate*

*Perche siamo nati.*

## ALFABETO

*in voi, aprite l'orecchie della vostra anima perche possiate vdire le voci di Dio, et pensate come bona christiana, che in questa vita non potete tenere piu riposo, ne piu contentezza, di q̃lla, che vi verrà mediante la cognitione di Dio, et della fede, et dello amore di Dio, et fermateui in questo pensiero molto dadouero, ponēdo da parte tutte le cose, che sono trāsitorie, et che nō pōno durare, et facendo questo cosi, io vi prometto, che tardarete molto manco in acchetare, et mitigare, et dar pace al vostro animo di quello, c' hauete tardato ad inquietarlo. Et se non vi riesce questo così, son contento, che non mai diate credito a cosa veruna di quāte io vi dirò. G. Veramente credo, c' habbiate indouinato la cagiōe, donde procede la mia infermità senza errar punto. O Dio aiutami, quanto cieche andiamo noi persone nel mondo. Medesimamente son certa, c' hauete pure indouinate in darmi la medicina, con la quale io sanì la 'nfermità. Resterà, ch' io mi raccomandì a Dio, et la pigli, che di sanare nō tengo dubbio, tanto maggiormēte tenendo il medico, come tēgo da mia parte. V. Il vero medico dell' anime è X̃po crocifisso. Ponēte in lui solo tutta la fidanza vostra, et la 'ndouinerete. G. Perche di q̃llo, c' hauete detto m' è venuto alla memoria vn dubbio, nel quale molte volte soglio pēsare, ui priego, che mi diciate intorno a ciò il parere vostro. V. Dimandate a piacere vostro. G. Vorrei sapere da voi, donde vēne alle persone questa*

*questa cecagine, d' andarsi perdute appresso le cose, che dilettono il sentimento, dimenticate di quelle cose, delle quali principalmente douerebbono tener cura continua? V. Queste sono reliquie del peccato originale. G. Questo è quello, che non intèdo. Dicono, che nel battesimo ci perdona Iddio il peccato originale. Poi che così è, che lo ci p̄dona. come ci lascia queste male inclinationi, et questa cecagine, essendo tanto pregiudiciali alla saluation nostra?*

*V. Questo hauete Signora ad intendere di questa maniera, che nel peccato originale si cōsiderano due cose, l' una la colpa, et l' altra la mala inclinazione, che è questa, della quale voi parlate. Et è così, che nel battesimo mediante la fede Iddio ci perdona la colpa del peccato, et quanto alla mala inclinatione, à poco à poco ne la v̄ curando, et medicando con la gratia sua, di tal maniera, che tanto potrebbe vna persona farsi perfetta con la gratia, et fauor di Dio, che venisse quasi à p̄dere tutte le mali inclinationi, tutti li sfrenati appetiti, et tutti li disordinati affetti, che regnano in noi per lo peccato originale. Conforme è à questo ciò che dice Sant' Agostino, che lo Spirito di Dio ristaura, et rinuoua in noi la imagine, et somiglianza di Dio, alla quale fummo creati: Nientedimeno lo intenderete meglio per questo essemplio. Tiene vn gran Signore vn seruidore, ilquale ama assai, et li fà molto fauore, et gratia. Fà que-*

*Peccato originale.*  
*Battesimo.*  
*Cōparatione.*

B

## ALFABETO

sto vna offesa grande al Signore, p la quale nō solamēte lo priua di tutto 'l suo fauore, et di tutta la sua gratia, ma cō giusto sdegno lo cōdāna à morte. Accade, che col tēpo vn' altra psona accetta al Signore priega p quel seruidore, alquale il Signore p contēplatione di quella tale psona fà gratia della vita, et benche nō lo ammetta al medesimo luogo di fauore, et gratia, che inanzi, che peccasse hauea, gli da entrata nel suo palazzo, et camera, perche possa col tēpo tornare ad entrare nel grado, che staua prima. G. Con l' esempio io lo finisco d' intendere et mi sodisfà tātō, ch' io resto cheta, et sēza scrupulo veruno quātō à questo, et nō pensate d' hauer fatto poco. V. S' io parlassi con persona di basso, grosso, et rozo ingegno, ben crederei d' hauer fatto qualche cosa, ma pche parlo cō cui parlo, hō bisogno di poca industria per farla capace della verità, di modo che non terrò di che gloriarmi, se non solamente del credito, che date alle mie parole. G. Horsu non piu di questo, vegnamo à quello, che fà al proposito, et ditemi il vostro parere intorno della cōtradittione, ch' io sento. V. Dico Signora, che così come vi hō compassione, et mi doglio, che viuiate nella confusione, della quale fin quì habbiamo parlato, così anchora stò allegro, et contento, che sentiate la contradittione, che dite. G. Perche? V. Dirolloui. Della cōfusione mi doglio, perche procede da colpa uostra, come habbiam detto, et ridonda in danno vostro,

*come voi medesima sperimentate, et della contraddittione m' allegro, perche conosco, che procede da questo, che la predicatione dell' Euangelio fà il primo suo effetto in voi. G. Perche chiamate la contraddittione, primo effetto della predicatione euangelica? V. Perche così, come la prima cosa, che fà la luce, entrando in vna camera oscura, è scacciare fuori le tenebre, et manifestare, et scoprire ciò che cō la oscurità non si vedea, così della medesima maniera, quando la luce della verità euangelica comincia à risplendere nell' animo d' una psona del mondo, scacciando in qualche modo le tenebre, et oscurità tanto della sensualità, quāto della ragione humana, scuopre, et caccia in luce quello, che staua coperto, et allhora quella tale persona tornando in se, incomincia à sètire, come quello, che innanzi tenea p buono, è malo, et quello, che giudicaua p vero è falso, et quello che le pareua dolce, è amaro. Et pche p nostra incapacità, et fragilità la luce di questa verità euangelica non risplende nelli principij tanto ne gli animi nostri, quāto saria di bisogno, per scacciare subito in tutto fuori di loro la oscurità, di tale modo, che chiara et manifestamente potessimo cognoscere il valore, et lo essere delle cose, accade, che combattendo tuttauia le tenebre con la luce, et la ragione humana con lo spirito Christiano, fanno, che si sentono i terremoti di contraddittion interiori, che voi Signora sentite. Di questo tene-*

*Predica del vangelo.*

Bii

## ALFABETO

*mo tanti essempli così nella historia di Christo, che scriuono i Vangelisti, come in quella, che scrisse San Luca de gli atti de gli Apostoli, come anchora nell' epistole di San Pauolo, che s' io volessi allegarui i luoghi, vno per vno, spēderiamo il tempo in questo, et p non spenderlo, li lascierò, perche voi medesima, poi che tenete il testamento nuouo in volgare, ve li leggiate, assignādogli io. Solamēte vi voglio dir questo, che potete tenere per dono, et beneficio di Dio questa contradittione, che sentite, et che douete seruire di lei, dando luogo alla luce, che resplēda più nell' anima vostra. Et in questo modo sarete libera della contradittione, et vi farete capace per riceuere gli altri doni di Dio, che sarāno dolci, et saporiti, et guardiui Iddio Signora di non sentire questa contradittione, però che è segno di durezza, et ostinatione. G. In fine questa è la resolutione, che io non posso finire d' intendere voi altri. Tutto il tema del predicatore è dire, che la predicatione dell' euangelo acqueta, et pacifica le conscienze, et voi hora dite tutto 'l contrario. Non sò che vi dire, saluo, ch' io non u' intendo. V. Adūque io farò, che voi ci intendiate, et intesi, conoscerete, che ambedui diciamo bene, et che nelle nostre parole non è contradittione. Et è così, che 'l predicator dice molto bene, che la predicatione dell' Euangelo acqueta et pacifica le cōscienze. Nientedimeno hauete ad intendere, che fà questo effetto in tutte quelle persone, che*



*riceuono, et abbracciano Christo mediante la fede, di modo che mediante la predicatione dell' Euangelo, che annuncia remissione, et perdono de peccati per Christo, la fede pacifica, et accheta le conscienze, ma di quelli, che tengono viuua et intiera fede. Così anchora dico io bene, che la medesima predicatione ingenera contradittione, terrore et spauento, ma in quelle persone, che se ben odono la predicatione, non però si determinano d'abbracciarla mediante la fede, ne la guardano, se non come se fusse legge di dottrina morale, et trouando, ch' è contraria à gli loro affetti, et appetiti, et desiderando conformarla con essi, vna volta vogliono una cosa, et l' altra volta desiderano vn' altra, et non compiendo di determinarsi, sentono bene vno de gli effetti della predicatione euangelica, ma non godono del frutto di lei. Hauete inteso? G. Sì molto bene, ma non intendo perche vi piace di vedermi in questa contradittione. V. Perche è segno, che ascoltate la dottrina, et se ben la predicatione euangelica non oprà in voi il suo principal officio, ch' è quello che 'l predicator dice, almen che sia m' allegro, che fà l' officio della legge, che è quello, ch' io dico, et spero nella gratia di Dio, che poi c' haurà fatto in voi officio di legge, farà anchora officio d' Euangelo. G. M' è diuiso, che vado intendendo quello, che volete dire, mà haurei piacere d' intèder vn poco piu particolarmente qual' è l' officio della legge, et qual' è*

Biii

## ALFABETO

La leg-  
ge.

*l' officio dell' euangelio. V. Anzi è molto bene Signora, che intendiate l' uno et l' altro. Et sap-  
piate, che la legge è regola della conscientia, et è  
così, che la cōscientia, nō è altra cosa, se nō legge  
intesa, l' officio suo è mostrare il peccato, et anchora  
accrescerlo. L' uno et l' altro intese San Paulo p  
isperientia, et come bene isperimentato lo scriue à  
gli Romani in quella sua eccellentissima Epistola,  
et il medesimo dice, che la legge opra ira, perche le  
persone si risentono, si sdegnano, et s' alterano,  
quādo con legge sono astrette. Dice più, che la legge  
è spirituale, perche, non la guarda integramente,  
ne la intende bene, se non l' huomo spirituale. I  
Propheti chiamano la legge, giogo graue, et scettro  
rigoroso, et altri nomi di questa qualità che signifi-  
cano seuerità. Et quando Iddio diede la legge à  
Moise, il popolo d' Israel, che staua à piè del monte,  
sentì, grandi tuoni, et lampi, di modo, che tutti  
tremauano di paura, et di spauento. Il quale tutti  
dicono, che significaua il terrore, et lo spauento, et  
la contraddittione de gli affetti, che la legge ingenera  
ne gli animi di quelle persone, alle quali è data.  
Ma con tutto questo hauete Signora da sapere, che  
la legge ci è molto necessaria, perche se non fusse la  
legge, non vi sarebbe conscientia, et se non fusse la  
conscientia, il peccato non sarebbe conosciuto, et  
se'l peccato non fusse conosciuto, noi non ci hu-  
milieremmo, et se noi non ci humiliassimo, non*

*acquistaremmo la gratia, et se non acquistassimo la gratia, non saremmo giustificati, et non essendo giustificati, non salueremo l'anime nostre. Et questo credo io, che voglia intendere San Pauolo, doue dice, che la legge è come vn pedagogo, o gouernadore, che ci conduce, et porta à Christo, accio che mediante la fede siamo giustificati. Vedete quì l'ufficio della legge. Il quale ufficio fà medesimamente l'Euangelio, mà in quelle persone, che non lo riceuono, se non come legge, ma in quelle che lo ricevono, come nuncio, ò messo di gratia, et di pace, il suo proprio ufficio è, sanare le piaghe, che fà la legge, predicare gratia, pace, et remissione di peccati, serenare, et pacificare le conscientie, dare spirito, con cui s'adempì quello, che la legge ci mostra della volontà di Dio, et con cui si combatta con li nemici dell'anima, et con cui si vincano, et abbattano per terra. Et così Christo venne mansueto, humile, pacifico, et pieno d'amore, et di charità, et non terribile, ne spauetoso, come la legge. Di modo, che la legge ci insegna ciò, che abbiamo à fare, et l'euangelio ci dà spirito, con lo quale lo possiamo adimpire. La legge fà la piaga, et l'Euangelio la sana, et finalmente la legge mortifica, et l'Euangelio viuifica. Non mi curo d'andare confermādo questo con autoritadi della sacra scrittura, per non occupare il tempo. G. Molto benefate. Non curate, se nō dite le vostre ragioni, che quādo ne direte al-*

Biiii

## ALFABETO

cuna, che mi paia dura, io vi dimanderò, che la mi confermiate con alcuna auttorità della scrittura. V. Sia così, et poi che già hauete inteso l'ufficio della legge, et l'ufficio dell' Euangelo, et con questo anchora sarà à voi più scopta la cagione, donde nasce la contraddittione, che sentite, sarà bene, che passiamo innanzi. G. Prima voglio, che anchora mi diciate vn' altro poco sopra di questo. V. Non sò, che più dirui, se non vengo al particolare. G. Hora questo è quello, ch' io voglio. V. Il predicator Signora con le sue prediche hà suegliato nella vostra memoria quello, che già voi sapeuate del Paradiso, et dello Inferno, et hà saputo tanto bene dipingerlouì, che 'l timore dello inferno vi fà amare il Paradiso, et l' amore del Paradiso ui fà temer l' Inferno. Et come vnitamente, con mostrarui questo, vè dice, che non potete fuggire dall' inferno, ne acquistare il paradiso, se non mediante l'osseruatione, et la guardia della legge, et della dottrina di Christo, et come questa ve<sup>1</sup> la dichiara, in modo, che vi pare non la possiate adimpire senza porui à pericolo d' essere mormorata, non istimata, disprezzata, et tenuta da poco dalle persone del mondo, combattendo in voi da vna parte il prouederui per l' altra vita, et dall' altra il non volere la confusione di questa, s'è genera in voi la contraddittiõe, che sentite, la quale tutta nasce dall' amore proprio, col quale amate voi medesima, temete l' inferno per uostro interesse, ama-

Paradi-  
so et  
infero.

Amore  
proprio.

<sup>1</sup> vi (?).

*te il Paradiso per vostro interesse, temete la confusione del mōdo per vostro interesse, amate la gloria, et l' honore del mondo p uostro interesse. Di modo, che i tutte le cose, che temete, o amate, mirādo bene, trouerete voi medesima. G. Mā chi volete, ch' io troui nelle cose mie, se nō me medesima? V. Voglio, che ritrouiate Iddio, et non voi, se volete esser libera della contradittione, confusione, inquietudine, scontentezza, et altri più di mille inconuenienti, dalli quali non vi potrete giamai liberare, mà mentre che trouerete Iddio, trouerete pace, serenità, quiete, contentezza, allegrezza, et spirito, et vna tanta infinità di beni spirituali, che non saprete come coglierli. Hora se volete disprezzargli, et se volete priuarui del Paradiso, et obligarui all' Inferno, per non voler uscir vn poco di voi, et entrare in Dio, vedetelo voi. Per me tanto io vi certifico, che non saria cosa nel mondo, che mi potesse dare eguale sodisfattione, et contentezza, come saria vederui camminare per questo camino Cristiano, pche conosco l' animo vostro tanto bene inclinato, che tengo per certo, che se incominciaste à innamorarui di Dio, vincereste in santità molte sante di quelle, che stanno nel cielo. G. Anzi io non desidero altro, Iddio sà la mia volontà. V. Poi che la desiderate, pche non la pigliate? G. Perche non sò dare modo, à ciò. V. Forza forza, che non modo Signora richiede il negocio euangelico. Et per tanto diceua*

## ALFABETO

*Christo, che dal tempo di San Giouan Battista patiria forza il regno delli cieli, et che quelli, che si fanno forza à se stessi, sono quelli, che lo rapiscono. Onde se vuoi volete pigliare il regno de' cieli, fateui forza à voi stessa, et così non temerete cosa veruna, perche, come diceua vna gran Signora di Spagna, „benche credo non à questo proposito, chi se vinse, „nessun teme. G. Lasciamo le parole, il fatto è, ch'io credo bene che tutta la mia confusione, la mia inquietudine, et la mia contradditione cessarebbono, entrando nel camino di Dio, et per questo mi determinerei subito d'entrare in quello, ma mi pare, che è tanto malageuole à trouare, che non oso pormi à cercarlo. V. Perche cosa vedete voi, che è malageuole à trouare? G. Perche veggio pochi, che caminino per quello. V. In cotesto tanto voi tenete*

*Difficul-  
tà nel  
camin  
di Dio.* *ragiõe, che pochi caminano p quello, mà sappiate, che questo non nasce tãto dalla malageuolezza del camino, quanto dalla nostra malitia, et imperfettione. Et pche vi voglio confermare in questa verità, voglio, che sappiate, che nella presente vita trouerete cinque maniere di psone. Alcune che non*

*Cinque  
modi di  
psone.* *conoscono il camino di Dio, ne lo vogliono conoscere, perche indouinano, che per caminare per quello, conuiene priuarsi di loro passatempi, et piaceri, et queste tali persone, ben che non con la bocca dicono, ma col cuore quelle parole, che dice Iob, notando la impietà de gli empij. Scostati Signore da noi al-*

tri, perche non vogliamo conoscere, ne sapere i tuoi camini. Di queste medesime dice David. Disse il „ non sauio nel cuor suo, non è Iddio, perche in „ verità non vorrebbero, che vi fusse Iddio. Trouete „ altre persone, che conoscono il camino di Dio, mà vinte dalli loro affetti; et appetiti, non finiscono di determinarsi à camminare per quello. Di queste Ciechi. tali dice Christo, che il seruo, il quale saprà la volontà del Signor suo, et non la farà, sarà più acutamente castigato, et in verità è così, che anche quì in questo mondo sentono le cotali uno continuo rimordimento di cōscientia, il quale le tiene sempre insipide, et malcontente. Trouerete altre psona, che Suaria- vogliono, et tengono volontà di sapere et conoscere ti. il camino di Dio, mà stando legate allo amore delle cose di questa presente vita, et pigliando souerchia diletatione in quelle, non le vogliono lasciare, et così non si dispongono, di modo, che Iddio loro habbia d' insegnare, et mostrare il suo camino. A' tali pone subito il demonio innāzi certi camini imascherati, et dà loro ad intēdere, che quelli sono i veri camini, et elle cieche con l' amore proprio di se medesime di bona voglia si lasciano ingannare, et dannosi ad intendere, che Iddio le porta, et è il demonio, che le guida. Di quì nascono le souerchie cerimonie, nascono Super- le pnitiosi superstitioni, et nascono le false deuotio- stitiosi. ni. Di queste tali persone dice Iddio p Esaià, Ogni „ di mi vanno cercando, et vogliono sapere, et cono- „

## ALFABETO

*Prudē-  
ti.* „ scere i miei camini, come gente, e' habbia viuuto giu-  
„ stamente, et che non habbia abbādonato il giudicio,  
et giustitia del Signor Dio suo. Trouerete altre  
persone, che vogliono conoscere questo camino di  
Dio, et s'ì dispongono à quello. Queste tali senten-  
do nell' anima la voce di Christo, che dice tornate in  
voi, che andate perduti, non è buono il camino, per  
lo quale caminate, perche non si v'è per quello al  
regno de cieli, tornano in se, et conoscendo, che van-  
no perdute, abbandonano il camino, che seguivano,  
et innanzi, che ne piglino alcuno, priegano Iddio,  
„ che loro mostri il vero camino, et questa è la dispo-  
„ sitione. Queste tali sentono incontinenti Christo, che  
„ loro dice, Chi vorrà camminare per lo vero, et certo  
„ camino, neghi se stessa, et pigli la croce sua sulle  
„ spalle, et seguami, imitandomi in ciò, che mi puote  
„ imitare, et sentendo, che in altro luogo loro dichiara  
questo, dicendo, imparate da me, che son mansueto,  
et humile di cuore, et così subito entrano per lo  
*Santi.* camino della negatione della propria volontà, et  
della pazienza, et vera humilità. Trouerete altre  
persone, che conoscono il camino di Dio, et camino<sup>1</sup>  
per quello, alcune con più et maggior feruore, che  
l' altre, nondimino di modo, che ne l' une, ne l' altre  
s'ì scostino dal camino, ne l' abbandonino, vanno  
bene, et queste in vero sono poche, come voi Signora  
dite, benche non sono tanto poche, come pensate,  
perche p esser il loro camino spirituale non po-

<sup>1</sup> camminano (?).



tendo esser vedute, se non con occhi spirituali, non è possibile che siano conosciuti, se non dalle medesime persone, che caminano p l'istesso camino. Queste viuono con continua ansietà di non offender Iddio, et se alle volte per fragilità vinte dalla tentatione cadono in alcun peccato mortale, subito tornano à Dio, et confessano il loro peccato, et non tengono necessità di molti apparecchi pur<sup>1</sup> la confessione, pche, come dice Dauid parlando di se, tengono sempre il loro peccato innanzi à gli occhi suoi. Queste medesime persone tengono alcuni diffetti, et alcune trascuragini, che sono segni, che gli animi loro non stanno in tutto mortificati. Pure ò loro diffetti, et le loro trascuragini molte volte sono ad esse cagione di profitto, perche s'è riconoscono, et s'humiliano, et così imparano di diffidarsi di se, et confidarsi di Dio. Et per questo dice San Pauolo, che à quelli, che amano Iddio, tutte le cose loro riescono à bene, et per questo dice in vn' altro luogo, che nessuna cosa è per condannare quelle persone, lequali essendo entrate in questo camino, stanno vnite con Christo Iesù per fede, et amore. Le prime persone sono impie, le secòde cieche, le terze suariate, le quartè prudenti, et le quinte sante. In modo, che se caminano poche persone per lo camino Christiano, potete vedere, che è più per la impietà, cecagine, et mutatione, che per la malageuolezza sua, et veduto questo, non haurete paura di trouarlo. Et poi che

<sup>1</sup> per (?).

## ALFABETO

*„ scere i miei camini, come gente, c' habbia viuuto giu-  
„ stamente, et che non habbia abbādonato il giudicio,  
Prudē- et giustitia del Signor Dio suo. Trouerete altre  
ti. persone, che vogliono conoscere questo camino di  
Dio, et s'ì dispongono à quello. Queste tali senten-  
do nell' anima la voce di Christo, che dice tornate in  
voi, che andate perduti, non è buono il camino, per  
lo quale caminate, perche non si v' per quello al  
regno de cieli, tornano in se, et conoscendo, che van-  
no perdute, abbandonano il camino, che seguivano,  
et innanzi, che ne piglino alcuno, priegano Iddio,  
„ che loro mostri il vero camino, et questa è la dispo-  
„ sitione. Queste tali sentono incontinenti Christo, che  
„ loro dice, Chi vorrà caminare per lo vero, et certo  
„ camino, neghi se stessa, et pigli la croce sua sulle  
„ spalle, et seguami, imitandomi in ciò, che mi puote  
„ imitare, et sentendo, che in altro luogo loro dichiara  
questo, dicendo, imparate da me, che son mansueto,  
et humile di cuore, et così subito entrano per lo  
Santi. camino della negatione della propria volontà, et  
della pazienza, et vera humilità. Trouerete altre  
persone, che conoscono il camino di Dio, et camino<sup>1</sup>  
per quello, alcune con più et maggior feruore, che  
l' altre, nondimino di modo, che ne l' une, ne l' altre  
s'ì scostino dal camino, ne l' abbandonino, vanno  
bene, et queste in vero sono poche, come voi Signora  
dite, benche non sono tanto poche, come pensate,  
perche p esser il loro camino spirituale non po-*

<sup>1</sup> caminano (?).

tendo esser vedute, se non con occhi spirituali, non è possibile che siano conosciuti, se non dalle medesime persone, che caminano p l'istesso camino. Queste viuono con continua ansietà di non offender Iddio, et se alle volte per fragilità vinte dalla tentatione cadono in alcun peccato mortale, subito tornano à Dio, et confessano il loro peccato, et non tengono necessità di molti apparecchi pur <sup>1</sup> la confessione, pche, come dice David parlando di se, tengono sempre il loro peccato innanzi à gli occhi suoi. Queste medesime persone tengono alcuni difetti, et alcune trascuragini, che sono segni, che gli animi loro non stanno in tutto mortificati. Pure ò loro difetti, et le loro trascuragini molte volte sono ad esse cagione di profitto, perche s'è riconoscono, et s'humiliano, et così imparano di diffidarsi di se, et confidarsi di Dio. Et per questo dice San Paulo, che à quelli, che amano Iddio, tutte le cose loro riescono à bene, et per questo dice in vn' altro luogo, che nessuna cosa è per condannare quelle persone, lequali essendo entrate in questo camino, stanno vnite con Christo Iesù per fede, et amore. Le prime persone sono impie, le secòde cieche, le terze suariate, le quarte prudenti, et le quinte sante. In modo, che se caminano poche persone per lo camino Christiano, potete vedere, che è più per la impietà, cecagine, et mutatione, che per la malagevolezza sua, et veduto questo, non haurete paura di trouarlo. Et poi che

<sup>1</sup> per (?).

## ALFABETO

(come penso) voi sete Signora delle quarte psone, fate di modo, che ascoltiate la voce di Christo, perche egli vi porrà per lo vero camino, et tegnate p certo, che in continenti, che sarete entrata, non sentirete più confusione, ne inquietudine, ne trauaglio, ne perplessità, et in fine non sentirete contraddittione alcuna, anzi per lo contrario sentirete molta pace, molta allegrezza, molta sodisfattione, et suprema contentezza. G. Tutto quanto dite mi sodisfà. Et poi che io determinatamente voglio entrare in questo camino, resta, che voi mi portiate per la mano, insegnandomi quelli passi, per li quali credo, che voi habbiate caminato. V. Non sò, che piu vogliate imparare da me di quello, che ogni di ui dice il predicatore. G. Io son debile, et non posso fare tãta resistentia al mio animo, quanta saria di bisogno per fare tutto quello, che 'l predicatore dice. V. Già io Signora u' intendo buon pezzo è, che bisogna andare p li rami? Io sò bene ciò, che voi uorreste. G. Che dispetto, poi che lo sapete, perche non lo dite? V. Perche, aspettava, che voi con la bocca vostra lo diceste. G. Fatemi questo piacere, poi che lo 'ntendete, che lo diciate, et io vi dirò la verità, se indouinate, in tutto et per tutto. V. Son contento. Voi Signora desiderate essere libera dalle cose noiose, che vi vāno p la fantasia, et hauendo conosciuto, che questo è il vero camino, p liberarui da loro uorreste, che io vi mostrassi vn camino reale, et signo-

Camino  
reale.

*rile, p lo quale poteste arriuare à Dio senza scostarui dal mōdo, aggiungere alla humiltà interiore, senza mostrare la esteriore, possedere la virtù della patietia, sēza che u' accadesse doue essercitarla, disprezzare il mōdo, mà di tal maniera, che 'l mondo nō vi disprezzasse voi, vestire l'anima vostra di virtudi christiane, senza spogliarui il corpo delle solite vestimēta, mātènere l'anima vostra con viuādi spirituali, senza priuare il corpo vostro de soliti cibi, parer bene ne gli occhi di Dio, sēza parer male ne gli occhi del mōdo, et in fine p questo camino voi vorreste poter fare la vita vostra christiana, mà di modo, che nessuna psona del mōdo p molta familiarità, et conversatione c' hauesse con voi, potesse conoscere nella vita vostra più di quello, che conosce al p̄sente, hò io indouinato? G. Quasi quasi, o almeno se nō hauete idouinato, potete dire, che sete andato alla uolta del segno. V. Cotesto mi basta, p poterui dire, che second' io veggio, vorreste più tosto liberarui dalla contradittione, che sentite p accordo, che p sentēza. G. Et poi, non mi dite voi sempre, che è meglio malo accordo, che bona sententia? V. Sì dico, ma nō in questo caso, nel quale l'accordo è molto picoloso, et terribilmente dannoso. Non sapete, che dice Christo, che non possiamo seruire à Dio, et al mondo, se nō che o habbiamo d'amare il mondo, et disprezzare Iddio, ouero habbiamo d'amare Iddio, et disprezzare il mondo? Et non hauete inteso quello, che*

## ALFABETO

*dice Iob, che la vita dell' huomo quì nel mondo nō è altro, che vna continua guerra? Mā sappiate, che la guerra è trà la carne, et lo spirito quando la carne ci tira al mondo, et lo spirito ci tira à Dio. Et tristi quelli che non sentono questa guerra. G. Horsù io intendo, et conosco bene l' uno et l' altro, et voglio, che senza più incarirlomi, resolutamente mi diciate, se vi basta l' animo à pormi in vn camìno, che tiri alquanto à quello, che voi hauete disegnato, benchè non sia tanto licentioso : percioche non sono tanto soggetta à gli appetiti miei, come voi deute pensare, secondo hauete dimostrato per le parole vostre. V. Se io Signora conoscessi nel modo vostro del viver, et cōuersar esteriore alcuna cosa dishonesta, et brutta, o che hauesse alcuna reliḡa, ouero alcuna mostra, o apparēza di male, liberamēte vi direi, che non mi bastaria l' animo di sodisfarui di ciò, che voleste, pche in tal caso essendo necessario, che lasciaste tutto ciò, che fusse male, saria necessario, che in voi si vedesse altro di quello, che hora si vede et conosce. Mā conoscendo io nelli modi vostri del viuere, et conuersare tanta honestà, et tanta compositione di costumi, quanta in vna tal Signora si puote desiderare, et vedendo, che tutta la reformatione, che u' è necessaria per conquistare, et aggiugnere al fine, che desiderate, cōsiste ne gli affetti, et ne gli appetiti dell' animo, li quali corretti, et reformati, sarebbe ageuole cosa riformare l' esteriore*

*riore in quello, che paresse tener necessità di riformatione, ardisco dirle, che mi basta l'animo di porui nel camino, che desideriate, di tale maniera, che se voi vi disponete à ciò, con la gratia di Dio, senza che persona del mondo lo ui possa conoscere, innanzi che passino molti giorni, comincerete à sentire la pace della conscientia, et gli altri frutti, che sentono le persone spirituali. G. Se voi faceste questo, io vi resterei perpetuamente obligata. V. Hor io lo farò con la gratia di Dio, et non voglio, che restiate obligata, se non al medesimo Dio, dal quale voglio, che sempre riconosciate tutto quello, che sarà buono. G. Io procurerò di farlo come dite. Fate voi hora ciò, che à voi tocca. V. Son contento, mà prima ditemi, se hauete mai passato alcuno fiume p vado. G. Si hò, et molte volte. V. Et hauete posto mente, come se guardate à l'acqua, pare che vi si volti la testa, di tal modo, che se non soccorreste tosto, o con serrare gli occhi, ò conficargli nella riuà, che tenete contra, cadereste nell'acqua con pericolo grande d'annegarui? G. Si che l'hò veduto. V. Et hauete veduto, come tenendo sempre, per obbietto della vista la terra, che stà dall'altra parte, non sentite quello suenimento di testa et così non portate pericolo d'annegarui. G. Et anchora hò veduto questo. V. Adunque se voi Signora volete passare per lo fiume corrente delle cose di questo mondo, fate di modo, che non mettiate affettio-*

*Côparatione.*

C

## ALFABETO

*natamente gli occhi in quelle, accioche non u' interuenga ciò, ch' interuiene à quelli, che mirādo nell' acqua, cadono in essa, et s' affocano, et procurate, che sempre gli occhi dell' anima vostra stiano fissi, et chiauati con Christo crucifisso, et se alcuna volta trascurata porrete gli occhi nelle cose del mōdo, di tal maniera, che sentiate, che l' animo vostro s' inclina à loro, ritornate sopra di voi, et tornate à porre gli occhi vostri in Christo crucifisso, et in questo modo le cose vostre anderāno bene. Et perciò soura tutte le cose voglio Signora, che pigliate p vostra principale intentione, innamorauì di Christo, regolando tutte l' opere vostre, tutte le parole vostre, et tutti i pensieri vostri con quello diuino commandamento, che dice, amerai il tuo Signore Dio „ cō tutto il cuore tuo, con tutta l' anima tua, et con „ tutte le forze tue, et il prossimo, come te medesimo.*

*Perfettiōe christiana.*

*Fрати et Monachi.*

*Et dico, che tegnate questo commandamento p vostra principal regola, perche la perfettiōe christiana consiste in amare Iddio soura tutte le cose, e 'l prossimo, come voi stessa. G. Merauigliomi di cotesto, che dite, perche in tutta la vita mia hò inteso dire, che i Frati, et le Monache tengono lo stato di perfettiōe per li voti, che fanno, se gli guardano. V. Lasciategli Signora dire, et crediate à me, che tanto terranno di perfettiōe christiana li Frati, et li non frati, quanto haueranno di fede, et amore di Dio, et non vn carratto piu. G. Molto mi piacereb-*



be, che mi faceste capace di questo. V. Di molto buona voglia. Hauete Signora à sapere, che 'l cuore humano è naturalmente inclinato ad amare, di tale sorte, o<sup>1</sup> d' amare Iddio, et per Iddio tutte le cose, ouero hà d' amare se medesimo, et per se tutte le cose. Quello, che ama se stesso, tutte le cose fa per se stesso, voglio dire, che tanto si moue à quelle, Amore quāto lo 'nuita il proprio interesse suo, et così se proprio. alcuna cosa ama fuor di se, amala per se, et per interesse suo, et se tiene alcuno amore à Dio, tienlo per suo interesse, et non per altro rispetto. Questo tale Frate, o non frate, perche tiene l' amor suo disordinato, tenēdolo posto in se, non sa giamai come, ne in che modo hà d' amare le cose create, anzi quando ben si vuole disporre ad amare Iddio, pche non indouina ad vscire di se, mai non ritruoua la via, et pciò continuamente vā peregrinādo in parerei, et così essendo sempre disordinato, et suariato ne gli affetti suoi mali, o buoni, viue molto fuori della pfettiōe xpiana, et tātō uiuerà più fuori, quāto più sarà innamorato di se, se bene nell' opre esteriori sarà pfettissimo, pche Iddio vuole il cuore. Quello, che ama Iddio, tutte le cose, che fà, falle p Iddio, uoglio dire, che si muoue à q̄lle p l' amore, che Amore porta à Dio, et q̄sto cō tātō feruore, o ipeto, q̄nto l' amore lo 'ncita, et muoue. Et così se alcuna cosa ama di Dio, amala p Iddio, et pche Iddio vuole così, di Dio. et similmēte ama se stesso, pche conosce, che Dio

<sup>1</sup> o hà d' (?).

## ALFABETO

*Iddio è  
amore.*

*vuole, ch' egli s' ami. Questo tale frate, o non frate, perche tiene l' amor suo ordinato in Dio: et quiui prende il modo: et la maniera, come ha d' amare tutte le cose create, è molto ordinato, et molto regolato nell' amor suo, et non ama disordinatamente cosa veruna. Et allhora le sue buone opere piaciono, et sono grate innanzi Iddio, perche s' muoue ad operare con impeto d' amore, perche così, come Iddio è amore, così non gli aggrada opra alcuna, che non sia fatta per amore. Conforme è à questo ciò che dice Santo Agostino, che le buone opre sieguono il già giustificato, et non vanno innanzi à quello, che hà da essere giustificato. Voglio dire, che le nostre opere all' hora sono buone, quando sono fatte da persona già giustificata, et non puote nessuna esser giustificata, se non stà in amore, et charità con Dio, et col suo prossimo. Di modo, che tanto sarà vna persona più perfetta, quanto starà più feruente in questo amore. In questa verità vi potete da voi medesima, confermare, considerando quanto istimareste quello, che vna persona facesse nelli vostri negocij, quando conosceste, che nō si mouesse à ciò per amore, che vi portasse, se non p alcun' altro disegno suo. Ma poi che voi volete, che vi serua per amore, vno che non nacque con la obligatione d' amarui, come nascemmo tutte noi psone per amare Iddio, pēsate se almāco vorrà Iddio da noi altri quello medesimo, che voi volete, quāto più*

*da quelle persone, che siamo rigenerate, et rinate in Christo p̄ nuoua regeneratione spirituale mediāte la fede, e 'l battesimo, perche noi tali tenemo vna nuoua obligatione d' amare Iddio, che dico vna? anzi douea dire infinite, poi che veggiamo, che infinitamente ci amò, et ama Christo, et p̄ infinite vie, et maniere procurò, et procura di portarci à se, et vnirci con se per amore, et per gratia. Et considerando questo, son certo, che vi farete capace di questa verità, che la perfettione Christiana consiste in amare Iddio, et che tanto sarà più ciascuno perfetto, quanto amerà più Iddio. Hora faccia voti, hora non gli faccia, pur che guardi il voto, che fece nel battesimo, mediante loquale siamo Christiani. G. Già io resto sodisfatta con quello, che hauete detto della perfettione, di tale modo, che conosco già per le vostre ragioni quello, che fin quì non haueua conosciuto. Et poi che volete, ch' io tenga per principale intentione l' amore di Dio, et del prossimo, per essere perfetta christiana, et io mi determino farlo così, sarà bene, se vi pare, che mi diate alcune regole, per le quali io intenda, et sappia, che è quello che io hò da fare, et come m' hò da gouernare p̄ nò dipartirmi dall' amore di Dio, ne del prossimo, p̄che determinatamente mi voglio dare ad innamorarmi tanto di Dio che priui di gratia voi, et altri cento, come voi. V. Priuar di gratia nò, anzi sappiate Signora, che in questo diuino amore non è gelosia,*

Ciii

## ALFABETO

Dieci  
coman-  
damēti.

*perche da se è communicabile. Et è così, che quanto piu voi amerete Iddio, tãto piu u' allegrerete, che Iddio ami noi altri, et che Iddio sia amato da noi altri. Ma lasciando questo, accioche col tempo lo impariate per isperientia, dico Signora, che non sono migliori regole per cotesto, che dite, che quelle, che'l medesimo Iddio ci hà dato nella sua perfettissima legge, laquale s' intendiamo non come Hebrei, ma come christiani, della forma, et maniera, che Christo la dichiarò. Ella ci 'nsegna quello, che habbiamo à fare, per non scostarci dallo amore di Dio, ne del prossimo. G. Se non u' è graue, poi che dite, che sono buone le regole della legge di Dio, per quello, ch' io desidero, sarà bene, che brieuemente le mi dichiarate della maniera, che voi le intendete. V. Anzi lo farò di molto buona voglia, perche conosco, che per condurui, et trarui al camino, che hò disegnato, questa è la porta. Ma perche non voglio, che le mie parole generino scrupoli nella vostra cōscientia, vi voglio prima auisare di questo, che io vi dichiarerò la legge di Dio non della maniera, che siete obligata d' osseruarla sotto pena di peccato mortale, ma della maniera, che la debbono intendere tutte quelle persone, che desiderano essere tanto signore de gli affetti proprij, et appetiti, che in tutte le cose siano obediēti allo spirito. Perche così, come v' à pericolo di veleno quello, che porta vna Vipera, o vno Scorpione in seno, così v' à gran pe-*

*ricolo di peccare mortalmente quello, che porta viui, et intieri gli affetti suoi, et gli appetiti. G. Hauete trouata la scrupulosa, non vi curate di più, cominciate à dire, che io starò tanto attenta, che forse non perderò vna sola parola. V. Così lo douete fare. Per prima regola piglierete, fare Iddio di tal maniera assoluto signore del cuor vostro, che non confidi, ne sperì in cosa veruna creata, ne ami, ne tema, se non solo Iddio, in modo che all' hora potrete far conto, che tenete il cuor vostro ordinato conforme à questa regola, quando spogliata d' ogni affetto humano, sentirete in voi, che ne le prosperitadi u' 'nalzano, ne le aduersitadi u' abbassano, ne gli honori vi 'nsuperbiscono, ne le 'ngiurie vi abbatano, et che con questo credete in Christo, sperate in Christo, et amate Christo, et viuite sicura, et contenta con Christo, abbracciando la croce di Christo, et tenendo per dolce il patire con Christo, et hauendo in abominatione la gloria del mondo, et tenendo per amari i piaceri del mondo. Et perche non basta, che 'l cuore stia di questa maniera, se la bocca non si conforma con lui, conuiene, che pigliate per freno per lei La seconda regola, et questa sarà, che continuamente lodiate, magnifichiate, inuochiate, et benediciate il nome di Dio, sprezzando, et tenendo da poco il nome vostro, et la gloria vostra, in tal modo, che tutta la gloria, et l' honore sia attribuita all' onnipotente Dio, alquale sempre*

*Amare Dio.  
Regola prima.*

*Lodare Dio.  
Regola seconda.*

Ciii

## ALFABETO

andranno indirizzate le parole uostre. Et pche con gli giuramēti nostri s' offēde molto la diuina Ma-iestà, terrete sempre nella memoria quelle parole di Christo, doue poi che ci ha ricordato, che in nessun modo giuriamo, dice, sia il parlare vostro, è è, non non, volendo dire, che quando vorremo affermare vna cosa, l' affermiamo con vno semplicissimo sì, et quando vorremo negare vn' altra, la neghiamo con vn' altro tale non. Perche quando più di questo si dice, è segno, che'l cuore stà indisposto. Oltra ciò perche non si contenta Iddio cō essere assoluto Signore de' nostri cuori, et delle nostre boc-  
che, ma vuole reggere l' opere nostre, piglierete per terza regola fare vna offerta à Dio di tutta la vol-  
ontà vostra, rimettendola in tutto, et p tutto alla sua diuina maiestà, in tale modo, che egli la regga, et egli la gouerni, senza che voi nelle cose vostre poniate niente del vostro. Et questo rimetterui alla diuina volontà, hauete Signora da sapere, che è celebrare il sabbato christiano, perche p lo riposo cor-  
porale s' intende il riposo spirituale, et per le opere seruili s' intendono l' opere del peccato. Questa of-  
ferta ci prega San Paulo, che facciamo, dicendo pregoui fratelli p la misericordia che Iddio ha usa-  
to cō noi, che offeriate i vostri corpi in sacrificio vi-  
uo, santo, et aggradeuole à Dio, di maniera, che in-  
tieramente gli offeriate tutta la volōtà uostra, tutto 'l vostro intelletto, et tutta la vostra memoria. Et prie-

Offerire  
la volon-  
tà à Dio.  
Rego.  
iij.

Sabba-  
to chri-  
stiano.

*goui anchora, che nò conformiate l' opere vostre con l' opre delle psone del mondo, et che vi trasformiate per rinouatione spirituale dell' anime vostre, accioche per questa via possiate sapere, et intendere la volontà di Dio. Vedete quì Signora tre regole, secondo tre cōmandamenti della legge di Dio, lequali sono tãto spirituali, che mentre le osseruerete, potrete essere certa, che amate veramente Iddio, della maniera, che egli vuole essere amato. Et pēsate, che tanto starete piu appresso, o piu lōtano dalla pfetitione di questo amore, quanto sentirete, che gli affetti, et gli appetiti vostri stanno piu appresso, o piu lontano da conformarsi con queste tre regole, le quali vi priego, che imprimate nella vostra memoria. Et benchè in verità sia così, che mentre viuerete conforme à queste regole, viuendo con amore di Dio, viuerete in amore del prossimo, di modo, che pare souerchio darui perciò regola alcuna, tuttauia considerando, che Iddio per soccorrere alla nostra incapacità, ci hà dato anchora regole, con le quali uiuessimo in amore del prossimo, vi voglio io dire le medesime. Et così le dette, come quelle, che si dirāno, piglierete come regole di Dio, et non mie. Et la prima Per sarà, che per essere così la volontà di Dio, con obedientia interiore obediate, et siate soggetta à vostri padri, à vostri maggiori, à vostri superiori di qualunque preeminentia, o auttorità, che siano, non facendo loro resistentia, ne mormorando di lo-*

*Per amare il prossimo. Rego. i.*

## ALFABETO

Regola  
secôda.

ro. *Et mirate Signora, che non pensiate contentarui con la soggettione esteriore, perche Iddio non si contenta, che i cōmandamenti suoi siano osseruati solamente in apparenza, anzi principalmente vuole il cuore. Et perche le cose del mōdo, con le quali più si corrompe la charità christiana, sono le risse, gli odij, et le nemicitie, dalle quali procedono gli homicidij, aduertite Signora di pigliare, p secôda regola, fare l'animo vostro paziente, cheto, pacifico, humano, misericordioso, sbandendo, et sradicando del tutto l'affetto dell' odio, dell' ira, et della vèdetta, et facendo questo così, viuerete cōforme à quella dottrina di Iesu Christo, che in sentenza dice, che nō ci adiriamo cōtra li nostri prossimi, ne gli sprezziamo con segni esteriori, ne gli vituperiamo cō parole ingiuriose. Et pensate, che non potrete far questo, se prima non cōponete l'anima vostra della maniera, ch' io u' hò detto. Et pche sappiate quāto u' importa, sapete, che dice San Giouanni, che quello, ilquale abhorrisce il prossimo suo, è homicidiale. In modo che, poi che per non essere homicidiale, bisogna, che muoia in voi tutto l'affetto dell' ira, et di vèdetta, di rancore, et di mala volontà, cominciate Signora da quì innanzi à fare questa mortificatione, perche quanto più tosto la incomincierete, più tosto uscirete con lei, et passerete allo essercitio della terza regola. Questa sarà, che procuriate quanto vi sarà possibile, tenere mortificati di tal maniera tut-*

Regola  
terza.



*ti i vostri sentimenti esteriori, che per loro non passi giamai al vostro animo cosa brutta, ne dishonesta. Perche vuole Iddio, che le vostre opre, le vostre parole, et i vostri pensieri siano casti et pudichi. Et per poter far questo, conuiene, che tegnate gli affetti vostri così mortificati, come u' hò detto, et conuiene anchora, che siate temperata nel mangiare, nel bere, et nel dormire, in conuersare con le persone del mondo, et in fine in tutte quelle cose, che ponno generare nell' animo vostro alcuno desiderio dishonesto. Et sappiate certo, che tanto p conseruare gli animi nostri puri, et netti, quanto perche non s' offenda la charità christiana è necessario, che morano del tutto questi appetiti lasciui, dalli quali nascono molti inconuenienti contra l' amore del prossimo. Et imperò Christo chiudendoci il camino, dice, che quello, che mirerà vna donna, et la desidererà, già hà peccato con lei nel cuor suo. Perciò quello, che non vorrà peccare, procuri, che mora con lui l' affetto, et l' appetito di peccare. Oltra di ciò, pche questo mio, et tuo sono mortali nemici della charità christiana, ci prouide Iddio d' una sana, santa, et necessaria dottrina, laquale piglierete p quarta regola. Questa è, che di tal maniera mortificate in voi tutto il desiderio, et l' appetito di quelle cose, che le persone del mondo chiamano beni, che non ponendo in loro felicità veruna, non desiate quelli, che non haurete, et possediate quelli, che ha-*

*Appetiti lasciui.*

*Rego. iij.*

## ALFABETO

uete, non come proprietaria, ma come depositaria, di modo tale, che se vi saranno tolti, non vi perturbiate di sorte, che vegnate à tenere mala volontà à quello, ouero à quelle persone, che ve gli torranno. Perche tenendo l'animo vostro così ben disposto, volontariamente farete ciò, che dice Christo, sì quanto à lasciare il manto à chi vorrà condurui à litigio per la gonnella, come quanto à donare de' vostri beni à tutti quanti vi dimāderanno. Et questa è la liberalità christiana, et questa è la vera pouertà tanto lodata, et commendata nella sacra scrittura. Et credo certo, che Dauid per questo chiama pouere le persone, che seruono, et obediscono à Dio. Et sappiate certo, che questa è la vera via, per scacciare, et suellare dell'animo vostro la maledetta auaritia, che è vno male tanto intrinseco, che per l'ordinario quelli lo conoscono manco, che stāno piu congiunti con lui. Ma lo inconueniente, che di lui ne segue, dimandatelo à San Paulo, et egli vi dirà, che l'auaritia è seruitù d' Idoli. Così come Id-dio volendo, che non offendessimo il diuino amore con la bocca, ci pose la seconda regola, che u' hō detto, parlando della guardia, c' hauete da tenere p l'amore di Dio, così anchora per la guardia del prossimo, ci pose regola nella bocca, et questa sarà la quinta. Questa è che tegnate anchora retta, et gouernata la lingua vostra, che non la vsiate mai, se non per gloria di Dio, et per utilità spirituale, o

Liberalità et pouertà christiana.

Auaritia.

Rego. v.

*corporale del vostro prossimo, et vostra, togliendo, et separando da voi tutte le occasioni, che vi ponno condocere, et tirare, che di vostra bocca esca parola, che offenda, o possa offedere alla piu abietta, et abbattuta persona di tutte quante sono nel modo. Et perche veggiate quanto importa questo, voglio, che sappiate, che San Giacobbo dice, che quello, il quale non pecca con la lingua, è huomo perfetto. Et auuertite Signora, che non vi dico io, che vna psona per guardare perfettamente il cōmandamento dell' amore del prossimo, hà da fare tutte queste cose puntualmente, perche non dico, se non che vna persona, che vuole essere perfetta, ha da tenere così bene moderati, et obedienti gli affetti suoi, che quādo bisognasse per honore di Dio farlo, non trouasse repugnantia in quelli. Et concludendo dico, che conforme à queste cinque regole, c' haruete vdite, deuete componer l' animo uostro, se volete aquistare perfettamente l' amore del prossimo, et conseruarui in quello, le quali comprese Christo in vna sola regola, dicendo. Fate con gli huomini tutto quello, che vorreste, che facessero con voi. Et è così, che non è persona nel mondo, che non le piaccia d' essere obedita, da quelli, che loro debbono obediētia, non è persona, che non le piaccia di conseruare la vita sua, et di non essere mal voluta, ne odiata da altrui, non è nessuna, che non le piaccia, che le psone non entrino in nullo malo pensiero con le loro*

*Aviso christiano.*

*Regola generale.*

## ALFABETO

mogli, figlie, sorelle, o parenti, tanto piu in opre dishoneste, non è nessuna, che non le piaccia d' esser soccorsa, et aiutata nelle sue necessitadi, et s' ha da viuere, che non procuri, che non le sia tolto, ne usurpato, et finalmente non è nessuna, che nō le piaccia, che tutte le persone del mondo parlino bene di lei, et che non si doglia di tutto lo contrario. In modo che facendo con li nostri prossimi tutto quello, che vorremo, et ci piacerebbe, che esse facessino cō noi, adēpiamo la legge di Dio, perche ci conseruiamo con loro in charità, et amore. Et da questo (come dice Christo) dipendono la legge, et li propheti. Et à questo potete ridurre tutto quanto stà scritto nella sacra scrittura. G. Mi tenete tanto attonita dapoi che incominciaste ad entrare in q̄ste regole, considerando la pfettione, che per viuere conforme à quelle, è necessaria, che non hò voluto replicarui à cosa di quanto hauete detto. Ma poi che hauete finito, voglio, che mi diciate, se si dannano tutte le p-sone, che non viuono cō la purità, con la netezza, et con la attentione, che voi hauete detto in queste regole. V. San Giouāni in vna delle sue epistole dice. Figliuoli miei io scriuo à voi queste cose, acciò che non pecchiare: ma s' alcuno haurà peccato, habbiamo aduocato giusto appresso di suo Padre Iesù Christo, et esso è la propitiatione p li peccati nostri. Questo medesimo dico io Signora à voi, che vi pōgo innāzi questa pfettione, pche trauagliando, et

Cōsolazione di  
S. Giouāni.

„  
„  
„

*procurando di viuere conforme à quella, non pecciate giamai. Ma voglio, che se peccerete, vi ricordiate, che Iesù Christo è vostro aduocato appresso del suo Padre eterno, ilquale sodisfece p li peccati nostri, et p quelli di tutto 'l mondo. Di modo che non pensiate, che le psone, che non tengono così mortificati i loro affetti, com' io dico, che desidero, che gli tegnate voi, secondo per queste regole u' hò mostrato, si dannerāno. Ma voglio, che sappiate, che di quelle, che non arriuerāno à questa pfettione, si salueranno quelle, che hauendo aperti gli occhi, et conosciuto il loro mal camino, et trouato il camino, che insegna Christo, secondo quì u' hò detto, buona-mente, quanto la fragilità humana lo soffre, trauagliano, et procurano di caminare p questo camino, mortificando l' huomo suo vecchio, et viuificando il nuouo, et mentre, che non arriuano, conoscono, et confessano con dolore de l' animo loro, che non sono tali, quali Iddio vuole, che siano, et con questo viuuo conocimiento dicono suiceratamente<sup>1</sup> quello del Pater noster, lascia à noi i nostri debiti, et quello di „ David, Crea in me Dio il cuor mondo, et spegni „ la mia iniquità. Et perche io conosco, la mia iniquità, et il mio peccato è sempre innanzi di me. Et se „ tutte le persone, che caminano p lo camino christiano, sempre viuessero così perfettamente, come quì habbiamo detto, non direbbe San Girolamo<sup>2</sup>, che se diciamo, che non tenemo peccati, mentiamo, ne di-*

<sup>1</sup> sinceratamente (?).

<sup>2</sup> (Giovanni).

## ALFABETO

rebbe il sauiò, che il giusto cade sette volte il giorno, et che altrettante ritorna à leuarsi. Et sappiate Signora, che è giusto, perche và per lo camino di giustitia, ilquale è quello, che Christo ci insegnò, et chi cade per fragilità, et si ritorna à leuare per la fede, et confidenza, che tiene in Iesù Christo, che gli perdonerà, et queste sono le infermitadi, et debilitadi, delle quali intende San Paulo, quando parlando di Christo, dice, che tenemo Pötifice, che puote hauere compassione delle nostre infermitadi, essendo stato vestito dell' habito della humanità nostra. Tutto il negocio consiste in uscire vna volta del camino del mōdo, et entrare nel camino di Dio, che dapoi entrati, cadendo, et leuando, scappucciādo, et non cadendo, tuttauia le cose nostre vanno bene. Per tanto non vi spauenti la purità di questa perfettione christiana, anzi vi supplico, che dadouero u' innamorate di lei, pche vi certifico, che mai non la 'ntenderete, se prima Iddio intrinsecamēte nō la u' insegna. Et perche la u' insegni, conuiene, che voi vi disponiate à sperimentarla. G. Questo vorrei, che mi deste ad intendere, à che proposito ci pose Iddio vna legge tanto malageuole da osseruare, che sempre ci hauessimo da confessare per debitori suoi, perche al parere tiene non sò che odore di tirānia. V. Anzi sappiate Signora, che in questo hà mostrato Iddio l' amore, che ci porta così bene, come in tutto lo resto, che hà fatto per noi, essendo così, che  
l' animo

La legge pche  
difficile.

*l'animo humano è tanto arrogantissimo, che se non si conoscesse per debitore del compimento della legge, non si terrebbe per peccatore, et se non si tenesse per peccatore, non temerebbe il giudicio di Dio, et se non lo temesse, non s'humilierebbe, et se non s'humiliasse, non acquisterebbe la gratia di Dio, et senza la gratia di Dio, non potrebbe esser giusto innanzi à Dio, et non essendo giusto, non si saluerebbe. Hora pensate se fu questo singularissimo beneficio di Dio, così bene, come tutti gli altri. Et sappiate Signora, che quanto vna psona in questa presente vita sarà piu perfetta, et starà piu unita, con Dio per amore, et charità, tanto piu s'humilierà innanzi di Dio, conoscendo piu la sua imperfettione, et la necessità, che tiene, che continuamente Iddio le perdoni i mancamenti suoi, et purifichi, et accetti l'opere sue. Et imperò David chiama beati non quelli, che non peccano, perche tutti pecciamo, ma quelli, alliquali Iddio perdona i peccati, che fanno. Restate voi sodisfatta con questo? G. Si resto, ben potete seguire piu oltre. V. Hora voglio, che pensiate, che in tre modi pecciamo in questa presente vita, Tre modi di peccare. per malitia, per ignoranza, et per fragilità. Per malitia peccano quelli, che ne sanno il camino di Dio, ne lo vogliono sapere. Il peccato di questi, secondo San Paulo, è castigato con cecagine, et con ostinatione nel peccato. La medesima sententia pronuntia Iddio per Hieremia. Questi con difficoltà*

D

## ALFABETO

*si leuano, secondo l'istesso Hieremia dice. Per ignoranza peccano quelli, che p non sapere indouinare il camino di Dio, vanno fuor di lui. Il peccato di questi secondo San Paulo, è ageuole da pdonare, perche così dice egli, che pche peccò per ignorantia perseguitando i Christiani, Iddio hebbe misericordia di lui. Per fragilità peccano quelli, liquali essendo entrati nel camino di Dio, non vorrebbono in modo alcuno offendere alla diuina Maiestà sua, ma alle volte vinti dalla tentatione cadono. Di questi fù David, et di questi fù San Pietro quando negò Christo. Il peccato de' simili perdona Iddio più ageuolmente, che nessuno de' gli altri, perche incontinente si conoscono, subito s'humiliano, et così subito acquistano la gratia di Dio, Anzi interuiene molte volte, che humiliati p lo peccato, caminano più animosamēte p lo camino xpiano. Co-  
 „ s' mostra David essergli interuenuto, dicēdo. Buon  
 „ p me: percioche mi humiliasti, acciò, ch' io impari le tue giustificationi. Questo u' hò io voluto dire, pche leuiate dalla conscientia vostra ogni generatione di scrupuli, liquali tutti ordinariamente nascono dall' amore proprio et da poco conoscimento di Dio, essendo certa, che caminando per questo camino christiano, non peccherete, se non p fragilità. Iddio vi perdonerà subito quello, che così peccherete, per la humilità, con la quale gli dimanderete pdonò, et per la fede, et confidentia, che terrete in*



*Iesù Christo. G. Con questo m' hauete data la vita intieramente, perche mi teneuate molto impaurita. V. Amate Signora, se volete cacciare dell' anima vostra tutto 'l timore, perche non puote dimorar timore nessuno nell' anima, la quale con vn viuio, et efficace pensamento pone gli occhi dell' anima sua in Christo crucifisso, considerando con intiera fede, che, Christo sodisfà, et paga per lui. Hor concludendo dico Signora, che queste regole vi porteranno all' amore di Dio, et del prossimo, et vi conserueranno nell' uno, et nell' altro, et allhora p isperiēza conoscerete i frutti della charità, secondo che San Paulo li scriue, dicendo, che la charità è patiēte, conuersabile, non inuidiosa, non insolente, non disdegnosa, et non cerca gli interessi suoi, non s' adira, nō pēsa di male nessuno, nō s' allega dlla malitia, pò si gode della uerità, et che tutto lo soffre, tutto lo crede, tutto lo spera, et tutto lo comporta. Conoscerete anchora q̃llo, che Sā Giouāni dice, che la perfetta charità leua fuori della conscientia tutto 'l timore. Perche quello che veramente ama non teme. G. Già io stò sodisfatta in cio, che tocca alla charità. Piaccia à Dio farlami così bene gustare, et sentire nell' anima, come voi me l' hauete fatta penetrare nello intelletto. Ma perche alle volte vi hò ṽdito dire, che la charità è il frutto della fede, vorrei, che mi diceste alcuna cosa intorno alla fede. V. Così è la verità, come dite, ch' io*

*Frutti  
della  
charità.*

Dii

## ALFABETO

*Charità frutto di fede.* u' hò detto, che la charità è il frutto della fede, et sapete perche vel dico? perche son certo, che doue è viuua fede, è charità. Et sappiate Signora, che così come il fuoco non può lasciare di scaldare, così la

*Fede.* fede viuua non può lasciar d' opare opre di charità, et u' hauete da imaginare, che la fede è come vn albero, et la charità è il frutto dell' albero. Et così, come l' albero, poi che è secco nō dà frutto, così mancando la fede nelli cuori delle persone, non u' è charità. Et mirate Signora, che quando dico fede, non intendo della fede, che solamente crede l' historia di Christo, perche questa può ben stare, et stà senza charità: et imperò la chiama San Giacomo fede morta, laquale tengono i mali christiani, et tengono similmente i demonij dello 'nferno. Ma intendete, che quando dico fede, intendo di quella fede, che viue nell' anima, guadagnata non con industria, ne con artificio humano, ma mediante la gratia di Dio, con lume souranaturale, laqual fede dà credito à tutte le parole di Dio, così alle minaccie sue, come alle sue promissioni, di tal modo, che quando sente dire, che Christo disse, che quello, che crederà, et si battezerà, si saluerà, et che quello, che non crederà, si dannerà, dà tanto credito à queste parole, tenēdole, p certissime, che non tiene dubbio alcuno della sua saluatione. G. In questo tanto bene ci cōuerremo voi, et io: percioche in credere nessuno hauera meco vantaggio. V. Non presumete di voi Signora, che

*credete, perche molto spirituale hà d'essere quello, che hà da tenere la fede tanto viua, quanto conuiene, per essere giustificato p quella, Anzi conosciate, che sete debole nella fede, et dite à Christo con gli Apostoli, Signore accresci in me la fede, et dite col padre del lunatico, Io Signore tengo confidentia in te, ma tuttauia tu Signore aiuta la mia incredulità, et per questa via guadagnerete piu, che persuaderui, che credete. Gran cosa è Signora ottenere da gli animi nostri, che intieramente si confidino in Dio, et lo vedrete per questo, che se ui dimandano, se credete gli articoli della fede vno per vno, risponderete, che sì, Ma se inaduertentemente, venendoui da confessare, vi dimanderanno, se credete, che Iddio u' hà perdonato i vostri peccati, direte, che pensate che sì, ma che non ne state certa. Hor sappiate, che questa incertitudine nasce da māmcamamento di fede, perche se voi intieramente vi confidaste nelle parole di Christo, che dice alli Sacerdoti, Sacerdoti. che tutto ciò, che legheranno in terra, sarà legato in cielo, et tutto ciò, che scioglieranno in terra, sarà sciolto in cielo, et se veramente crederete quello, che confessate nel Credo, quando dite, che credete la remissione delli peccati, non dubiterete di dire à bocca piena, sentendo nell'anima vostra dolore dell' offesa fatta à Dio, et hauendola confessata, che tenete Remissione di peccati. Cōfidare in Dio. p certo, che Iddio u' hà pdonato tutti i vostri peccati. Volete veder chiara et manifestamente come*

Diii

## ALFABETO

*non vi confidate intieramente in Dio? ditemi con qual cosa stareste più senza pensiero, et più riposata, et in qual cosa vi confidereste più per poterui certificare, che per questo anno tenete bene di che viuere, con vna bona somma di danari, che haueste in vno banco, o in quello, che Christo promette à quelli, che cercherāno il regno di Dio, quādo ei dice. Non tegnate pensiero di quello, che hauete da mangiare, ne di quello, che hauete da vestire, poi che Iddio tiene pensiero di voi, cercate prima il regno di Dio, et il medesimo Iddio vi prouederà di tutte queste cose? G. Non è dubbio, se nō che terrò più confidentia nelli danari del bāco, ma se io mi conoscessi tanto pfetta, che meritassi, che Iddio hauesse pensiero di me, p ventura mi confiderei più nelle parole di Christo. V. Anzi è al cōtrario, che quanto più pfetta fuste, tanto manco merito trouereste in voi. Et è così, che quello, che stà più appresso alla gratia di Dio, stà più lontano da pēsare, che la merita. Et per questo diceua San Paulo, che per la gratia di Dio era ciò, ch'era, non attribuendo niente alli meriti suoi. Di modo Signora, che se cōfidate poco nelle parole di Christo, non è per quello, che dite, se non per che non date loro credito, et questa è la maggiore ingiuria, che si puote fare à Dio. G. Molto mi stringete, tosto mi fareste credere, che non tengo fede. V. Non voglio, che crediate, che non la tenete, ma voglio, che pensiate, che la*

*tenete morta, et voglio, che preghiato molto instantemente Iddio, che ve la viuifichi, et vi faccia forte in quella, poi che secondo San Paulo senza fede nessuno puote aggradire à Dio, et se volete mirare in ciò, trouerete, che con nessuna cosa vi puote vno vostro amico offendere tanto, quanto con non dare credito alle parole vostre, et per lo contrario, che con nessuna cosa vi puote fare maggior seruitio, et piacere, che con dare intiera fede à tutto quanto gli direte. G. In cotesto tanto voi dite la verità, che stremamente mi duole, quando non sono creduta, et molto mi piace, quādo mi danno credito. V. Poi che conoscete di voi cotesto, douete pensare almanco il medesimo di Dio, et pensando lo trauaglierete di imprigionare, et soggiogare lo 'ntelletto vostro alla obediēza della fede, et così imparerete à confidarui in Dio, et à dar intiera fede alle sue parole, tanto quando minaccia, come quando promette. Et per non rattenermi molto in questo, dico, che se intieramente ponessimo tutta la nostra confidenza in Christo, dando intiera fede alle sue promesse, non dependeremmo, ne starēmo tanto legate alle creature, nelle quali cōfidiamo più, che in Christo, pche siamo carnali, et non giudichiamo delle cose, se non tanto quāto il senso estrinseco le ci rappresenta, et così nō tenemo conto con le intrinseche. Potrei ben dire cose merauigliose, s' io uolessi incominciare à lodarui la fede, ma bastiui sa-*

Diiii

## ALFABETO

*Fede et  
speranza.*

*Còparatiōe.*

*Idea di  
p̄fettiōe  
xp̄iana.*

*pere questo, che tanto sarete christiana, quanto vi sapete confidare in Christo, essendo così, che essere vna persona christiana, è essere giusta, et non puote alcuna essere giusta, se non per la fede, perochè il giusto viue p̄ la fede. G. Mai non hò potuto finire d'intendere, che differenza è trà la fede, et la speranza, et piacerebbemi di sapere da voi, in che maniera la differentiate. V. Non mi merauiglio, che non lo intendiate, perche il medesimo interuiene à molte persone dotte. Hora sappiate, che la fede, s' essercita nelle cose della presente vita, et la speranza in quelle della vita eterna. Ilche hauete da intendere à questo modo. Voi volete dal Muolo passare alla Isola di Crape<sup>1</sup>, ma nō sapete come. Vēgo io à voi, et dico, fidateui Signora di me, che vi passerò à piedi per la mano, senza che vi affochiate nel camino, et passata vi porrò in quel luogo dell' Isola, che desiderate di stare. Voi anchora, che vi paia cosa fuor di ragione, date credito alle mie parole, et fidandoui d' esse, mi pigliate per mano, et caminate per l' acqua. Vedete quì, che la fede uì porta, et insieme vi porta la speranza di godere del contento, che u' hanno detto, che si troua in quella Isola. Intendete hora la differenza? G. Sì, et molto bene. V. Hor tornando à nostro proposito, voglio Signora, che uì poniate innanzi à gli occhi dell' anima vostra la idea della p̄fettiōe christiana, secondo, che quì l' habbiamo, ragionata, et che*

<sup>1</sup> Capri (?).

*posta, u' innamorate di lei, et innamorata, non vi contentiate, fin che giugniate molto appresso d' essa, et pensate, che allhora starete appresso quando conoscerete in verità, che 'l cuor vostro non s' inclina ad amare cosa veruna, fuor che Iddio, ne la bocca vostra sente dolcezza in nominare altro nome, che quello di Dio, et questo solamente lo nomina per gloria sua. Et quando sentirete, che voi non inclinate ad operare cosa nessuna, che non sia conforme alla volontà di Dio, et quando trouerete l' animo vostro molto obediante, et soggetto alli vostri maggiori, et molto alieno da ogni ira, da ogni vendetta, et da ogni rancore, pieno di pace, et d' humilità, et tanto alieno da ogni vitio carnale, che in lui non trouerete pensiero, che non sia casto, et tanto pouero di spirito, che à nessuna cosa u' inclinerete col desiderio vostro, più, che à conseruare cid, ch' egli tiene, et tanto feruente nell' amore del prossimo, che non solamente voi non parlate in suo pregiudicio, ma se vdite, che altri parlino, quanto u' è possibile lo iscusate, et discolpate, in tutto questo voglio dire, che quando vi sentirete tanto mortificata, sì ne gli affetti, et appetiti esteriori, come ne gli interiori, che ne la gloria del mondo u' inalza, ne il dishonore u' abbatte, et che ne l' ira u' insignoreggia, nè la 'nuidia vi molesta, ne meno u' inquieta la carne, potrete bene, et veramente credere, che state appresso alla perfettione christiana. Io non dico, che*

## ALFABETO

*pensiate, che nō state in buono stato, quando nō state tanto innanzi (come hò detto) nella pfettione, ma dico, che fin che sentiate, et conosciate in voi questa pfettione, così come la vi hò dipinta, non lasciate di pregare Iddio cōtinuamente, che l' accresca in voi, et se bene veniste à fare miracoli, et d' altra parte nō vi sentiste molto forte, et ferma in questa pfettione xpiana, non vorrei, che pensaste d' hauere acquistato alcuna cosa. Questa è la pfettione, alla quale c' inuita Christo, quando dice, che siamo pfetti così come il Padre nostro celestiale è pfetto. Alla medesima c' inuita San Paulo, dicendoci, che imitiamo Iddio, come figliuoli amorosi, et dicendo in altro luogo, imitate me così, come io imito Christo. Et alla medesima u' inuito io voi, et alla medesima desidero, che voi conuitiate me con parole, et con ope. G. O Dio mio, che pagherei io per vedere vno christiano così pfetto, come quì l' haue- te dipinto? parmi, che mi spoglierei di tutto quanto tengo. V. Et non sarebbe meglio vederui voi tanto pfetta xpiana, quāto io quì hò dipinto. G. Sì, ma cotesto è impossibile. V. Come impossibile? Non sapete, che dice Christo, che tutto è possibile à quello, che ottiene da se, di mettere tutta la sua cōfidenza in Dio? G. Ben l' hò inteso dire, ma io son debile. V. Et anchora quanto più sete debile, tanto sarà maggiore la gratia di Dio, che vi farà forte, se però confesserete in verità, che sete de-*



*bile, et confidate in Christo, che vi fortificherà. Nò sapete, che dice l' euangelio? che quello, che è impossibile à gli huomini, è possibile à Dio? G. Desiderolo tanto, che non oso sperarlo. V. Hor se lo desiderate, dimandatelo à Dio, et dimandategliele, come dice San Giacomo con confidenza, che ve lo darà, et io vi prometto, che non vi mächerà. Gran cosa è questa, che vogliono le persone essere credute nelle loro promesse, essendo naturalmente varie, et (come dice Daudid) bugiarde, et che non vogliono dare credito, ne confidarsi nelle promesse di Dio. Veramente io credo, che questa sia la maggiore ingiuria, che le persone possano fare alla diuina Maiestà, così, come anchora il credere, et confidare nelle sue promesse, è il sacrificio piu grato, che far gli si puote. G. Non curate d' indugiarui piu in questo, se non cominciate à guidarmi per lo camino di questa perfettione christiana, poi che già mi tenete tanto innamorata di lei, che mi pare non poter viuere contenta fin che io giunga, se non intieramente, almanco in tanta parte, quanto mi basterà, perche le cose mie siano accette nel conspetto di Dio. Ma si intende, che tegnate sempre rispetto à portarmi tanto segretamente, che nulla persona mi senta, perche se io lo posso iscusare, non voglio dare di che parlare alle genti. V. Io farò ciò, che dite, ma mirate Signora, che nauouamente voglio, che mi promettiate di gio-*

## ALFABETO

uarui di quello, che quì vi dirò, perche non vorrei hauere io perduto il tempo, et che voi vi restaste in voi medesima, come prima. G. Fidateui di me, et io vi prometto, che innanzi di molti di con la gratia di Dio vedrete in me l'effetto delle vostre parole. V. Con cotesta confidenza ricupererò animo, p discoprirui di questo camino di perfettione christiana quello, che io sò, et hò potuto intendere. Et prima che io incominci à mostrarui i passi, per li quali hauete da caminare, voglio che sappiate questo, che San Paulo in molti luoghi delle sue epistole diuide l'huomo in due parti, l'una chiama carne, et

Divisiõe  
de l'huo-  
mo.

l'altra spirito, l'una vecchio huomo, et l'altra nuouo huomo, et sappiate, che per vecchio huomo intende l'huomo non viuificato p la gratia dello spirito santo, et che per nuouo huomo intende l'huomo già viuificato per la gratia dello Spirito Santo. Il vecchio huomo chiama carne, et chiamalo corpo soggetto à peccati, donde pare, che sotto 'l nome di carne intende tutto l'huomo, anima, et corpo senza Spirito Santo, et la natura senza la gratia. Questo istesso si dimostra per quello, che in altra parte dice, che la carne combatte contra lo spirito, et lo spirito contra la carne, nelquale combattimento se l'anima si lascia vincere dalla carne, meschiandosi con lei, si fa tutta carnale, et se si lascia persuadere dallo spirito, congiungendosi con lui, si fa tutto spirituale. Et perciò San Paulo quasi sem-

*pre divide l'huomo in due parti, et dico quasi, p-  
che in vno luogo, o due pare che lo diuida in tre,  
cioè in spirito, anima, et carne. Già che hauete sa-  
puto, che cosa è vecchio huomo, carne, et corpo sog-  
getto à peccati, et che cosa è nuouo huomo, anima,  
et spirito, et perche intendiate bene qual cosa di  
queste viue in voi, perche così meglio conosciuta la  
piaga, potrete applicare le medicine, sappiate, che  
secondo il medesimo San Paulo, gli appetiti, et  
gli affetti della carne sono morti<sup>1</sup>, et sono nemici  
di Dio, perche ne uogliono, ne ponno soggettarsi al-  
la legge di Dio. Sappiate più, che i frutti della carne  
esteriore sono homicidij, ingiurie, et peccati carna-  
li, et che gli interiori sono ambitione, auaritia, in-  
uidia, ira, vendetta. Sappiate più, che secòdo il me-  
desimo San Paulo gli affetti dello spirito sono vi-  
ta et pace, vuol dire, che mediante lo spirito vi-  
ue l'anima, et la conscientia stà pacificata, et ac-  
chetata. Sappiate più, che i frutti dello spirito sono  
charità, allegrezza, sincerità, pace, benignità, bontà,  
fede, mansuetudine, et temperantia. Di maniera,  
che vno medesimo huomo, secòdo la natura è uec-  
chio huomo, et secondo la gratia è nuouo huomo.  
Il vecchio huomo non aggiunge alle cose, che sono  
dello spirito di Dio, anzi cieco con la ragione sua  
humana le tiene per vane, et suariate. Il nuouo hu-  
omo tutte le cose giudica, et egli non puote esser giu-  
dicato da nessuno. Di tutto ciò, ch'è detto potete Si-*

*Lacarne  
et suoi  
frutti.*

*Affetti  
dello  
spirito.*

*Frutti  
dello  
spirito.*

<sup>1</sup> morte (?).

## ALFABETO

*gnora cogliere, che l' anima vostra stà in vno di tre stati, o s' hà meschiata con la carne, et fatta carnale, o s' è vnita con lo spirito, et fatta spirituale, ouero stà hora nel combattere, che la carne la vole p se, et lo spirito la conuita à se. Et conuine<sup>1</sup>, che facciate questa esamina, pche se ritrouate l' anima vostra con la carne, vi raccomandiate à Dio, et con queste regole diate fauore allo spirito, pche cominci à combattere et esca con la vittoria, et se la trouate con lo spirito, con continua oratione procurate di conseruarla, et se la trouate non determinata, facciate forza à voi medesima, pche tosto tosto si determini d' abbracciarsi, et congiungersi con lo spirito, accioche così diuenga tutta spirituale, et ricuperi quella imagine et somigliāza di Dio, alla quale fù creata. Et pensate Signora, che è impossibile, che non stiate in vno di questi tre stati, pche pensando questo, sō certo, che esaminerete molto bene, quale è quello, in cui state. G. Già io lo tengo bene esaminato, et p quello, che hauete detto, l' hò conosciuto molto piu chiaramente. Fate stima ch' io stò nel peggiore stato, et cō qsto p̄supposito cōformerete le vostre parole. V. Poi che così è, raccomandandouì con vno affetto intrinseco à Dio, perche aiuti questa sua opera, fate, che con tutto l' animo stiate molto attenta. G. Lasciatemi il peso. V. Il primo passo, c' hauete à dare i questo camino, è conoscere in verità, che fin hora sete andata fuor di camino, ben*

<sup>1</sup> conuine (?).

*Passo  
primo.*

*che voi pensaste d' andare per buono camino. Et perche son certo, che hauete ampiamente conosciuto questo per li sermoni del predicatore, non mi curerò ditenerui in mostrarloui. G. Ben fate, perche quantunque il predicatore non me l' hauesse mostrato, per quello, che voi m' hauete molte volte detto, lo harei inteso. V. Stà bene, et poi che conoscete, che state fuor di camino, Il secondo passo* *Passo. secôdo.*  
*sarà, applicare la volontà vostra à voler caminare per questo camino, che il predicatore u' hà disconuerto, et io penso piu particolarmente mostrarui. Et similmente penso certo, che sete già andata per questo passo, perche li sermoni del predicatore debbono hauere mossa l' anima vostra, et disposta di maniera, che conoscete quello, che u' importa; et imperò desiderate già incominciare à caminare per la via diritta. G. Di cotesto tanto vi prometto, che lo desidero piu di quello, che pensate. V. Tenete Signora questo desiderio per dono di Dio. Hora perche non basta tenere vna cosa nella volontà, se non ci deliberiamo di parola<sup>1</sup>* *Passo. terzo.*  
*in effetto, Il terzo passo è, che determinate non solamente di lasciare il camino, per lo quale à voi pareua, che caminaste à Christo, ma anchora di pigliare questo, per lo quale senza mancamento veruno trouerete Christo. Et pensate, che quando hauerete fatto questi tre passi, hauerāno fatto in voi l' effetto suo quelle parole, con le quali prima San Giouan-*

<sup>1</sup> porla (?).

## ALFABETO

ni Battista, et dapoi Christo incominciarono la loro predicatione, dicendo, *Pœnitentiam agite, appropinquauit enim regnum cœlorum*, cioè, *Fate penitentia, pciocche s' approssima il regno de' cieli*, come s' hauessino detto, *Tornate in voi, che andate pduiti, tornate al buon camino, aduertite, che s' approssima il regno delli cieli.* G. Subito ch' io conobbi, che il cammino, ch' io teneua, non era buono, desiderai trouare il buono, et proposi tra me di camminare per quello, se Iddio mi facesse gratia, che lo trouassi. V. Perche per questo camino non si può camminare senza il fauore et gratia di Dio, et questo non dà Iddio se non à quelli, che lascino di peccare, et lasciano d'intendere in cose, che gli possano trahere à peccato, et in cose curiose. Il quarto passo è, che disponiate l'animo vostro à celebrare il sabbato christiano, voglio dire, che lasciate di peccare, et non mi cōtento con che non tegnate peccato esteriore, perche voglio, che incominciate à lasciare gli interiori, perche sapete, che sono quelli, che vi priuano della gratia di Dio, et voglio, che lasciate d'intendere in cose curiose, et che destramente scostiate da voi tutte quelle compagnie, et conuersationi, che ponno allontanare da Dio, et distrahere l'animo vostro, et delle quali nessuno vtile potete conseguire per lo fine, che pigliate di viuere à Christo, et non al mōdo. Desidererei io bene, che Iddio mouesse l'animo vostro con quello istesso impeto di spirito, che mos-

se in

Passo.  
iiiij.

Cele-  
brare il  
sabbato  
xp̄iano.

Le cose  
curiose.

*se in Epheso quelli, liquali vedita la predicatione di San Paulo, si conuertirono à Christo, et portarono i libri loro, nelli quali imparauano, et essercitauano cose curiose, et in presenza di tutti quelli, che là si trouarono, gli abbruggiarono. Ma se non vi trouerete con questo impeto di spirito, mi contenterò, che per hora lasciate stare tutti questi libri curiosi in vno cantone, perche vi faccio sape, che sono molto grande impedimento per quello, che incomincia à caminare per questo camino. Et già vedete, che potete leuar via tutti questi impedimenti senza notabile dimostratione esteriore. G. Veggio bene, che m'è utile il fare così, ma non veggio, che lo possa fare senza notabile dimostratione. V. Come nò? non vi basta l'animo di gouernarui tanto prudẽtamente, che lasciando queste cose, paia che non le lasciate? G. Seguite piu oltre, che in questo io farò quanto voi mi consiglierete, ch'io faccia, pche in ciò mi voglio piu gouernare con la prudẽtia vostra, che con la mia. V. Cotesto mi basta. Hora perche non basta lasciare il male, se non u' applicate al bene, conuiene, che d'oggi auanti pigliate alcuna parte del tempo, che perdeuate in queste cose curiose per entrare profondamente nella cognitione del mondo. Et questo sarà il quinto passo. Il mōdo conoscerete per falso, perche in lui non è cosa, che non tenga piu d'apparenza, che d'essenza, p ingannatore, perche mai non adempie ciò, che pro-*

*Libri  
curiosi.*

*Cogni-  
tioẽ del  
mōdo.  
Passo.  
quinto.*

E

## ALFABETO

*Il mondo tragedia.*

*Passo. vi.*

*Abhorrire il modo.*

mette, per vano, perche tutto 'l suo fondamento è sopra cose caduche, et transitorie, per nemico di Dio, pche sempre procura di scostarne dal camino della verità, et metterci in quello della menzogna, et falsità, et p in costante perche giamai non perseuera in vna medesima opinione. Et in fine riducete alla memoria vostra quella bellissima tragedia, che udiste dire dal predicatore, con la quale mostrò, che le persone in questo mondo non siano altro, che rappresentatori d' una tragedia, essendo così, che l' essere nostro non tiene più fermezza, che il loro, ne dissomiglia in altro, se non che quello delli rappresentatori dura alcune hore, e 'l nostro alcuni anni. Per questa cognitione passerete ogni dì, perche tanto, quanto più conoscerete il mondo per questa via, tanto più l' abborrirete, et questa abominatione sarà il sesto passo, voglio dire, che la vostra intentione di conoscere il mondo, nò sia per fermarui là, se non per passare per lui ad abhorrire il mondo. Il quale vi giouerà p perdere il gusto delle cose del mondo, come sono honori, dignitadi, stati, signorie, et ricchezze, le quali tutte con questa consideratione disprezzerete, et terrete da poco, desiderosa di guadagnare Christo, et di viuere con Christo, ad essemplio di San Paulo, che istimaua, che tutte le cose fossero immondezze, et bruttura, tenendo posto tutta la intentione sua à guadagnare Christo. Et così il medesimo San Paulo ci priega, che non ci



conformiamo col mondo, ma che rinouiamo gli animi nostri, accioche possiamo prouare, et sapere, che è la volontà di Dio. Poi che hauendo conosciuto il mondo, l'hauerete abhorrito, o per meglio dire, poi che siate entrata un poco nella cognitione del mōdo, et nella abominatione del mondo, piglierete vn' altro poco di tempo p entrare nella cognitione di voi stessa, et questo sarà il settimo passo. O Signora quanto importa il saper conoscere le persone medesime. Son certo, che se lo sapessimo in verità, poneremmo molto maggiore studio, et diligentia in questo, che in qualunque altra cosa. G. In che consiste cotesta importanza? V. In che se non vi conoscete, giamai non lascerete d' amarui disordinatamente, et mentre u' amerete così, non potrete amare Iddio, et mentre non amerete Iddio, non potrete fare, dire, ne pensare cosa, che sia in honore di Dio, et non essendo in honore di Dio, pensate se sarà in vtilità dell' anima vostra. G. Quanto che io ampiamente conosco me, così conoscessi io gli altri. V. Et ancho in questo stà Signora lo 'nganno, che nō conoscendoui, pensate di conoscerui. Et faccioui sapere, che ha da essere molto spirituale persona, quella che intieramēte s' hà da conoscere. G. Io credo, che sia così, et poi che importa tanto cotesta cognitione, insegnatemi, come farò p conoscermi. V. La prima cosa, che douete fare, è persuaderui, che non vi conosciate, La secōda,

Cognitione di se stesso.

Passo. vij.

Eii

## ALFABETO

Esami-  
na di se.

*conoscere in verità la necessità, che tenete di conoscere, la terza, pregare Iddio, ch'apra gli occhi dello 'ntelletto vostro, accioche vi possiate conoscere, et la quarta, occuparui vn poco ogni dì in esaminare gli affetti vostri, et gli appetiti, che u' inclinano à disobedire à Dio. Laquale inclinatione hauete da considerare, che vi venne p lo peccato originale: et imperò la terrete per la piu pernitirosa, perchè u' è naturale, et così vi fà, che sfrenatamente amiate voi stessa, et vogliate tutte le cose p voi, Di quì imparerete à non confidare niente di voi, et così viuerete sempre sopra di voi. Dapoi di questo discorrerete vn poco per la vostra vita passata, et trouerete molti difetti, liquali vi tireranno à conoscere chi voi sete, conoscerete, come conosceua David, molta iniquità interiore, et molta rebellion contra Iddio, conoscerete cō lo medesimo che ogn' huomo è falso, et bugiardo, vuol dire, che tiene mala opinione delle cose di Dio, conoscerete con Hieremia, che il cuore humano è peruerso, et conoscerete, che dice Iddio, che i sentimenti, et i pensieri del cuore humano sono sempre mali, Trouerete in voi stessa molta ingratitudine c'hauete usata contra Iddio. Questa conoscerete ogni volta, che esaminerete da vna parte i beneficij, che hauete ricevuto dalla mano di Dio così i generali, delli quali godono tutte le persone del mondo, come li particolari, delli quali voi sola godete, et specialmen-*

*te il beneficio della passione di Christo, et l'hauer-  
 uì tirata à cognitione d' essa, accioche godiate, et  
 vi giouiate con essa, et dall' altra parte le vostre  
 opere, nelle quali tutte hauete mostrato grande in-  
 gratitudine, nelle male, per hauer offeso Iddio, che  
 vi diede l' essere, che tenete, et vi ricomperò col suo  
 pretioso sangue, et in quelle, che paiono à voi buo-  
 ne, perche intenderete, come le faceuate, non p amo-  
 re di Dio, ma per amore di voi medesima poi che  
 siate vissa, nō in amore di Dio, ma in amore di voi,  
 et per essere il vitio della ingratitudine tanto più  
 abomineuole, et vile in voi, quanto che hauete rice-  
 uuto forse piu doni da Dio, sì nel corpo, come ne-  
 l' anima, che nessuna altra persona, che hoggi sia  
 nel mondo, pensate se terrete cagione di star male  
 con voi, et di sospettare di voi ogni male, et così  
 viuere sempre molto circonspecta di voi stessa. In  
 questa cognitione della vostra depocagine et ingra-  
 titudine conuiene, che entriate ogni dì, non per di-  
 morare là, ma per passare all' ottauo passo, che sa-  
 rà il vostro abhorrire voi medesima. A q̃sto ver-  
 rete ageuolmente, perche quanto più vi conoscere-  
 te, tanto più u' abhorrirete, et più sospetterete di  
 voi ogni male, et se bene intieramente non u' abhor-  
 rirete, almanco perderete l' amore, che portate à voi  
 stessa, essendo così, che la cosa, che i se è mala, quā-  
 to più, et meglio si conosce, tanto più s' abhorrisce, non dico, che u' abhorriate, per trattar male la per-*

*Passo.  
 viij.  
 Abhor-  
 rire se  
 stesso.*

*Amor  
 proprio.*

Eiii

## ALFABETO

sona vostra, ma *p* dispogliare il cuor vostro dell' amor proprio, ilquale è il maggior ipedimēto c' habbiamo *p* la gratia. Essendo così, che nessuno nemico habbiamo tanto mortale, come questo, *pche* egli è quello, che *p* tutte le vie, et modi, che gli sono possibili, trauaglia *p* separarci da Dio, anzi si tiene tanto ciechi, et tanto trasportati, che à pena ci ricordiamo di Dio, Et *pcid* dice il Propheta Micheas, che gli nemici dell' huomo sono suoi familiari. Per tanto Signora se volete caminare leggiermente per questo camino christiano, trauagliate entrādo ordinariamente nella cognitione della vostra propria miseria, et debilità di bandire da voi questo mortale nemico dell' amor proprio, et sappiate certo, che sbādito questo, v' fate capace, *pche* subito subito vēga lo Spirito Santo à dimorare in voi. Et *pche* come andrete dispogliando il cuor vostro dell' amor proprio, lo andrete vestendo dell' amor di Dio, cōuiene Signora, che subito subito varchiate al nono passo. Questo è, che come hauete pigliato vn poco del giorno *p* entrare nella cognitione di voi medesima, *p* uenire cō essa à disamorarui di voi stessa, così senza tardare molto la pigliate vn altro poco *p* entrare nella cognitione di Dio, *p* venire *p* essa ad innamorarui di Dio. A questo verrete ageuolmēte, essendo così, che la cosa, che in se è buona, quanto più si conosce, tātō più s' ama. Et *pche* di migliore voglia entriate in questa cognitione, sapete, che dice

Passo.  
ix.

*Christo, che la vita eterna consiste in conoscere Iddio, et suo figliuolo Iesu Christo, et che il Sauio dice, che conoscere Iddio è p̄fetta giustitia, et che sapere la giustitia, et la virtù di Dio, è radice, et fondamento d'immortalità. G. Fate stima, che così come non hò saputo conoscere me medesima, così m̄aco sò conoscere Iddio, et insegnatemi, come hò da conoscerlo. V. Trè vie sono, p̄ le quali le psone sono venute, et vengono in cognitione di Dio, l'una è p̄ lume naturale, questa hebbono i Philosophi gētili, et tengono hoggi le gēti, che nō conoscono X̄po. Di questa cognitione parla San Paulo, quādo dice, che p̄ le cose visibile vengono le psone à cognitiōe delle cose inuisibili di Dio. Et è così, che cōsiderādo le psone questa fabrica mondana, nella quale veggono tante cose eccellenti, vanno indagando, et imaginando quelle, che non veggono, et p̄ l' une, et p̄ l' altre vengono à conoscere, che Iddio, ilquale le fece, è onnipotente, et passando più auanti alla cōsideratione della mirabile prouidentia, cō laquale gouerna et regge tutte le cose, di tal maniera, che l' une nō impediscono l' altre, anzi l' une aiutano, et seruono all' altre, vengono à conoscere, che Iddio è sommamente sauio, et la medesima sapientia. Oltra di questo passando alla consideratione della equalità, con laquale senza differentia tutti questi beni celestiali, et terrestri sono diuisi alle persone del mondo, conoscono in Dio somma bontà.*

Ei iiii

## ALFABETO

Testamento  
vecchio.

*Di maniera, che con solo lume naturale le persone del mondo leggendo nel libro delle cose create, hanno conosciuto, et conoscono in Dio onnipotentia, sapientia, et bontà. L'altra via di conoscere Iddio è per la sacra scrittura, voglio dire per lo testamēto vecchio, il quale daua cognitione di Dio, ma impfetta, mostrandolo adirato, crudele, et vendicatio : et imperò lo chiama Iddio della vendetta, et Iddio de gli esserciti, et così altri nomi di rigorosità. In questo modo conosceuano Iddio, i ciechi Hebrei, ma tuttauia è manco scura cognitione, che quella, che haueuano i gentili, perche anchora che seruissero, come schiaui, già seruiuano come*

Conoscer  
Dio p  
Xp̃o.

*che sia. La terza via di conoscere Iddio, è p Christo. Questa via è la certa, la chiara, et la sicura, et questo è camino piano, reale, et signorile. Et sappiate Signora, che in conoscere Iddio per Christo consiste tutto lo essere del christiano, perche per conoscere Iddio per Christo, è necessario conoscere prima Christo. Et perche non possiamo conoscere Christo per lume naturale, ne per altra industria humana, se Iddio intrinsecamente non alluma, et apre gli occhi dell' anima nostra, dico, che questa cognitione di Dio per Christo è sopranaturale, p la quale bisogna speciale gratia da Dio. Et che sia la verità, che non possiamo tenere vera cognitione di Dio, se non per Christo, lo dimostra l' istesso Christo, dicendo, che nessuno puote venire à lui, se suo*

*Padre eterno non lo porterà et dimostrarlo anchora per quello, che ripose à San Pietro quando lo confessò per vero figliuolo di Dio, dicendogli, beato te Simone figlio di Giouanni, perche questo nò hai acquistato per ragione humana, ne per lume naturale, se non perche così halloti riuelato mio Padre, ilquale stà nelli cieli. Quando conosciamo Iddio per Christo, lo conosciamo amoroso, benigno, misericordioso, et pietoso, perche in Christo ritrouiamo amore, benignità, misericordia, et pietà. Vedete quì Signora tre vie per conoscere Iddio, secondo tre diuersità di generationi di gente, che hanno tenuto, et tengono cognitione di Dio. Et perchè le due prime non sono à vostro proposito, le lascerete stare, et solamēte u' esserciterete nella terza, ch' è conoscere Iddio per Christo. Ma perche l' essercito<sup>1</sup> sia gioueuole, conuiene, che conosciate Christo, non con cognitione acquistata per costume, ne guadagnata per ingegno, et industria humana, ma per lume di fede ispirata per lo Spirito Santo. Di questa maniera è dibisogno, che conosciate Christo, se volete per Christo venir à conoscere p̄fettamente Iddio. G. Non sò ciò, ch' io vi rispōda, à me tanto pare, che conosco ben Christo, eccetto se non u' è altra cognitione segreta, alla quale io non arriuo. V. Hor questa cognitione segreta è q̄lla, ch' io dico, alla quale puengono le persone per inspiratione. Et perche non pensiamo, che basti la cogni-*

Cono-  
scere  
Christo.

<sup>1</sup> essercitio (?).

## ALFABETO

*tione publica di Christo, che tiene vno assassino, et vn traditore, cì disinganna San Giouanni dicendo, che quello, che dice, che conosce Iddio, et non osserua i commandamenti suoi, è bugiardo. G. Mi pare, che molto mi stringiate, et tanto più lo sento, quanto che non tengo che replicarui. Hor sù nō perdiamo tempo per vita vostra, che m' apriate vn poco il camino, per lo quale io possa entrare nella vera cognitione di Christo. V. Io vi darò Signora alcuni principij, mediante liquali raccomandandoui à Dio, l' istesso Iddio vè reuelerà il resto. Et così dico, che la vera cognitione di Christo, poichè già credete, che è vero Iddio, et vero huomo, et come Iddio eguale al suo eterno Padre, et vna medesima cosa con lui, consiste Signora in sapere, et considerare à che venne il figliuolo di Dio al mōdo fatto huomo, perche patì, et perchè risuscitò. G. Queste tre cose voglio io imparare da voi della maniera, che voi le considerate. V. Potete Signora considerare, che Christo venne al mondo à sodisfare per lo peccato originale, perche essendo stata la colpa infinita à rispetto di Dio, che fu offeso, conuenia, che la sodisfattione fusse infinita, et questa non la poteua fare, se non il medesimo Iddio, che è infinito. Et imperò il Figliuolo di Dio fatto huomo sodisfece per lo peccato del primo huomo, et insieme per tutti i peccati di tutte le persone, che furono, erano, sono, et saranno, et à*

*Perche  
Christo  
incarnò.*



*quelli, che lasceranno di godere di questa sodisfatione, mancherà per colpa loro. Venne Christo ad habilitare gli huomini, accioche possano essere figliuoli di Dio, Vène à mostrarci il camino del cielo, Venne à cōfondere la superbia della carne, et à predicare la humilità dello spirito, Vène à distruggere la morte, Venne à rompere le forze del Demonio, Vène à darci, et comunicarci il suo spirito, con lo quale potessimo fare la volontà di Dio, Perche con la legge solamente ci haueua Id-dio dichiarato la sua volontà, ma la legge non ci daua forze, con le quali la potessimo adimpire, Venne à mostrarci l'amore, che'l suo Padre eterno porta alla humana generatione, ilquale perfettissimamente si vede, et conosce in Christo, Et in fine venne ad aprirci le porte del Paradiso, et ad habilitarci, accioche potessimo entrare in esso. Hora considerando queste cagioni, per le quali vène Christo, pensate voi se potremmo acquistare p altri, che per lo figliuolo di Dio fatto huomo tanti, et così singolari beneficij. Oltra di questo quando vogliate considerare, perche patì, insegneraloui il medesimo X̄po, dicendo, cum exaltatus fuero à terra, omnia traham ad meipsum, cioè, quando io sarò essaltato da terra, traherò ogni cosa à me stesso, come se dicesse, per diradicare le psone dall'amore delle cose di questo mondo, et innamorarle delle cose della vita eterna, è dibisogno, ch' io sia*

*Perche patì X̄po.*

## ALFABETO

posto in croce, et dicendo in altro luogo, che conuenia, ch' egli fusse posto nella croce, pche tutti qlli, che in lui credessino, si saluassino. Et sappiate certo, che non è luogo nessuno, doue meglio possiate conoscere Iddio, che in Christo crucifisso. Et più vi sò dire, che se la contemplatione di Christo crucifisso non vi disamora delle cose del mondo, et v' innamora delle cose di Dio, sempre starete miserabilmente legata alle creature, tanto che vna delle cose, perche io penso, che San Paulo nomina Christo mezano trà Iddio, et gli huomini, è perche non possiamo conoscere, credere, ne amare Iddio, se non mediante la contemplatione di Christo crucifisso, ilquale patendo, fece dolce il patire, et soffrendo, fece ageuole il sofferire, et essendo ingiuriato, fece dolci le ingiurie, et morendo, fece saporito il morire. Non vi pare, che furono queste cagioni bastantissime perche Christo patisse? Nò vi pare, che in esse ci hà mostrato Christo tanto amore, quāto basta, pche noi ci desamoriamo di noi stessi, et ci innamoriamo di Dio? Ma considerādo più auāti trouerete, che Christo risuscitò pche noi risuscitassimo con lui, così in spirito in questa vita, come in carne nella vita eterna, et la risurrettione spirituale è, quādo p mezzo della mortificatione dell' huomo uecchio viene ad essere viuificato l' huomo nuouo. Et questo è passare dalla morte alla vita, et così come Xpo p la morte venne alla risurrettione, così noi p

Perche  
risuscitò  
Xpo.

la mortificatione veniamo alla viuificatione. Et questo è quello, che Christo disse à Nicodemo, che quello, che non sarà rigenerato p acqua, et p Spirito Santo, non puote entrare nel Regno di Dio. Cōsidererete anchora in Christo, che salio alli cieli per inalzare gli animi nostri alla contemplatione delle cose celestiali. Alla quale ci conuita San Paulo dicendo, se siate fratelli risuscitati spiritualmēte con Christo, alzate gli animi vostri alle cose alte, doue Christo stà assiso alla destra del suo Padre eterno, inuestigate le cose alte, non quelle, che stanno sopra la terra, et finalmente considererete, che mādò Christo lo Spirito Santo, perche c' insegnasse la verità delle cose, perche bandisse da noi tutto l'amore delle cose corporali, perche c' infiammasse nell'amore delle cose spirituali, et perche mediante lui ricupassimo, et ristaurassimo in noi quella imagine di Dio, alla somiglianza della quale fummo creati. Per queste considerationi potrete Signora venire à poco à poco, aiutandoui Iddio, et fauorandoui con la gratia sua alla perfetta cognitione di Christo, et per Christo alla vera cognitione di Dio. Et così ve n' andrete innamorando di Dio, et innamorando di Christo. Et della medesima maniera andrete verificando dentro di voi quelle verità, che confessate nel Credo. In modo che quello, che hora confessate per obedientia, soggiogando il vostro intelletto, all' hora confesserete con alcu-

Perche  
mandò  
lo Spiri-  
to Sāto.

Il Credo.

## ALFABETO

*na isperienza. Di questo modo, che così, come congiunta la prima cognitione di Dio, che è per lume naturale, quale hebbono i gentili, con la cognitione, che s' hà p la scrittura del testamēto vecchio, laquale hebbono gli Hebrei, puote vno con verità dire, che crede in vno Dio Padre onnipotente creatore del cielo, et della terra, così, anzi molto meglio, dapoi che habbiate conosciuto Christo, et per Christo conosciuto Iddio, et p Iddio ritornando à conoscere Christo, potrete, et per dir meglio direte con verità, sentendo nell' anima ciò, che dite, quello medesimo, che l' altro hà detto, et confessato, et passando più auanti, direte con verità, che credete in Iesu Christo figliuolo di Dio vn solo Signore nostro. Questo crederete così, pche l' amore, et la obediēza, cō la quale conoscete, che Christo si mostrò obedientissimo alla volontà di Dio, et tutte l' altre diuine perfettioni, che conoscerete in Christo, vè certificheranno, che Christo è figliuolo di Dio, et la dolcezza, et charità, che considererete in Christo, vè costringerà à tenere lui solo per assoluto Signore vostro. Et passando più oltra nella verità, crederete, ch' egli fù conceputo per opera dello Spirito Santo, perche la mirabile perfettione, che conoscerete in Christo, u' assicurerà, che la sua generatione, o concettione non fù cosa ordinaria, ma veramente opra dello Spirito Sāto. Et con questa segurtà entrando più profon-*

*Cōcet-  
to di  
Spirito  
Santo.*

damente nella cognitione di Christo, cōfesserete puramente, che nacque del ventre della vergine Maria, perche intenderete, che tanta perfettione, conoscere in Christo, non poteua nascere, se non da madre perfettissima, et imperò conueniua, che fusse vergine auanti il parto, et nel parto, et dopo 'l parto. Appresso questo, quando sentirete dentro dell' anima vostra, che contra ogni ragione naturale u' è dolce il patire, u' è sapo- *Nato di Maria uergine.*  
 rito il penare, et u' è gloriosa la croce, conoscendo in verità, che la gloria nella confusione, et l' honore del vituperio non si trouerebbe, se Christo non hauesse nobilitato et l' uno et l' altro, con riuia fede confesserete, che Christo patì, essendo *Patì.*  
 Presidente Pontio Pilato. Et quando haurete crucifisso et sepolto con Christo il vostro huomo vecchio con tutti i suoi affetti, è suoi appetiti, non terrete dubbio alcuno di credere, et confessare, che Christo fù crucifisso, morto, et sepolto. Dopò questo quando vi veggiate li- *Sepolto.*  
 bera in alcuna maniera del peso de gli appetiti<sup>1</sup> vostri, et de gli affetti, considerando, che così come Christo u' hà liberato da quello Inferno, così anchora liberò i Santi Padri dal Limbo, *Liberò il Limbo.*  
 crederete con verità, che Christo discese allo 'nferno. Et quando passando più auanti sentirete la viuificatione dell' huomo nuouo, et per essa vedrete, che sete risuscitata con Christo, sarete sfor-

<sup>1</sup> appetiti (?).

## ALFABETO

- Risuscitò.* zata à confessare, che il medesimo Christo il terzo dì risuscitò da morte. Et quando verrete à sentire, che tutti i desiderij vostri sono dirizzati allo spirito, tutti caminano verso il cielo, conoscerete, che già Christo stà nel cielo assiso alla destra di Dio Padre, et così lo confesserete. Subito infiammato l'animo vostro con desiderio, che 'l mondo vegga Christo glorioso poi che già lo vide passibile, tenendo per certo, c' hà d' essere così, confesserete, che Christo hà da venire à giudicare i viui, et i morti. Et perche lo Spirito Santo, che dimora in voi u' aprirà gli occhi, perche conosciate in molte altre persone il medesimo spirito conforme à quello, che „ dice David: Qui timent te, videbunt me, et „ lætabuntur, cioè, quelli, che temono te, vedranno me, et s' alleggeranno, con tutto 'l cuore, à bocca piena confesserete lo Spirito Sāto. Con questa medesima cognitione crederete anchora la Santa chiesa catholica, et la communione spirituale delle sante persone, che sono in essa. Essendo così, che conoscerete in verità, che Christo tiene quì nel mondo vna Chiesa vniuersale Santa per la participatione della santità di Christo, la qual Chiesa abbraccia, et contiene buoni, et mali, et che tiene vna vnione spirituale di sante persone mantenute per la gratia dello Spirito Santo, lequali viuono in fede, speranza, et charità, et conoscendo voi, che hauendo confessato i vostri peccati ad vno Sacerdote

cerdote di questa chiesa vniuersale, et hauendoui egli assolta, et hauēdo voi dato credito alla assolutione, che da parte di Dio u' hà fatta, sentite l'animo vostro pacificato, et acchetato, confesserete in verità, che in q̄sta Chiesa vniuersale è remissione di peccati. *Remissione di peccati.* Oltra di questo quādo per isperienza interiore hauerete sentito la verità di tutto 'l resto, che vno fedele christiano dee credere, non dubiterete di cōfessare la risurrettione delli corpi. *La resurrettione di corpi.* Il che vi si farà tanto più ageuole da confessare, quanto che haurete confessato la risurrettione di Christo, et nell' anima vostra cominciando à sentire il profitto d' essa, finalmente quādo sentirete, et gusterete quello, che della dolcezza, et amore di X̄po quì in questa vita si sente, et s' gusta, tenendo quello tal gusto, et sentimēto p̄ arra di quello, c' hauete da gustare, et sentire nell' altra vita, donde spererete certo d' andare à goder p̄petuamente con X̄po, non dubiterete di cōfessare la vita eterna, et all' hora quando tegnate dentro di voi vna tale isperiēza, la fede vostra sarà *La uita eterna.* viuua, et vera, p̄che terrete dentro di voi la isperienza d' essa. Hora mirate bene, et considerate Signora il frutto, che traherete da conoscere Iddio per Christo, et considerando, che tanto sarete christiana, quanto terrete viuua nella vostra anima questa cognitiōe di Dio p̄ Christo, son certo che di buona voglia dimenticherete alquanto di voi medesima, entrando in questa diuina cognitiōe, nella quale doue-

F

## ALFABETO

*te entrare molte volte il dī, se volete caminare per questo camino christiano. Anzi voglio Signora, che lo facciate cosī, pche voglio, che incominciate già à caminare, et che non vi scorra il tempo in desiderij, et io tanto non vi saprei dire più del detto intorno di questa cognitione di Christo. Spero bene nella bontà di Dio, che come incomincerete ad entrare in esso, trouerete tante cose, delle quali io quī nō hò saputo far mentione, che quanto hora mi tenete per lungo in parlare, tanto all' hora mi terrete per curto in dire. G. Anzi m' allegraua tanto d' udirui, che il maggior dispiacere, che m' hauete fatto, è stato il passare tanto breuemente per cose tanto alte, et tanto importanti. Più vi dico, che per non u' interrompere, hò lasciato di dimandarui alcune cose, che mi s' offeriuano, che già mi sono vscite della memoria, ma non importa, seguite auanti. V. Non sò che dirui più sopra ciò, se non che voglio, che vi serua il già detto più p andare al segno d' entrare nella cognitione di Dio, et di Xpo, che per indouinare, perche lo 'ndouinare hà d' essere per ispetiale dono, et gratia di Dio, laquale voi sempre gli hauete à dimandar affettuosissimamēte, et quando cosī gliele dimanderete, vi prometto, che nō la vi negherà. G. Gran cosa è la forza, che tiene la parola di Dio. Dicolo perche vi certifico, che non è ragione nessuna di quante u' odo, che nuouamēte nō m' accrescano la uolōtā, che tengo di ca-*

*Gratia  
di Dio.*



*minare p questo camino christiano. V. Tutte coteste nuoue voluntadi hauete Signora ad abbracciare, et riconoscere dalla mano di Dio. Et sappiate, che le parole mie non potrebbero bastare a cotesto, se costà dentro nō vi stesse sollecitādo lo Spirito Sāto. Hora pche in nessuna cosa possiamo le psone conoscere, ne intendere intieramēte l' amore, che Iddio ci tiene, la sua misericordia, la sua pietà, et la sua benignità, si nō in Xpo. Per questo dico Signora, che la uia più certa, e' l camino più signorile p venire à conoscere Iddio, è conoscerlo p Xpo. Et così dice il medesimo Xpo, ch' egli è la via, la verità, et la vita, et così il Padre eterno ci cōduce à conoscere Xpo, et Xpo ci tira à conoscere il Padre eterno, et à Xpo non possiamo venire, se non per Christo, et la vita eterna consiste in conoscere Iddio, et in conoscere Christo. Perche così dice il medesimo Christo parlando col suo Padre eterno. Questa è la vita eterna, che le persone ti conoscano te vero Iddio, et Iesu Christo quello, che mandasti nel mondo. G. Priego Iddio, che mi dia gratia, che lo conosca in verità, così com' egli vuole essere conosciuto. V. Tenete Signora buona confidenza in Dio, che certo lo conoscere, et conoscēdolo, procurerete di innamorarui di lui, seruendoui di questa cognitione per questo effetto, et qsto sarà il decimo passo, col quale voglio, che Passo. essercitādoui nella cognitione di Dio, et nella cognitione di Xpo, u' innamorate di Dio, et u' innamo-*

Fii

## ALFABETO

*riate di Christo, uoglio dire, che incominciate ad innamorarui di Dio, et ad innamorarui di Xpo. Del qual amore pche già nel passato u' hò detto à bastanza, rimettendomi à quello nō voglio tenerui in dirui particolarmente alcuna cosa della necessità, che tenemo di lui, come delli merauigliosi effetti, che fù nell' anima, doue stà viuuo, et feruente, et come secondo San Giouāni Iddio è charità, et quello, che viue in charità viue in Dio, et Iddio viue in lui, che è certo altra dignità et altra felicità, che viuere nel mondo, et che 'l mōdo viuua in noi. Dico adunque che mi voglio passare p tutto questo, et venire à dirui, et certificarui, che tanto mediāte la cognitione di voi stessa pderete dell' amor proprio di voi stessa, quanto mediāte la cognitione di Dio guadagnerete dell' amor di Dio. Et questo è vscir di voi, et entrare in Dio. G. Per questo dicono, che tātō è quello, che nō intende, come quello, che nō vede. Haueua io vdito dire mille volte cotesto vscire la psona di se, et entrare in Dio, ma non mai in tutto l' hauea fornito d' intendere fin' hora. V. Tanto più siate obligata ad amare Iddio, poi che u' hà conseruata tanto in questo mondo fin che siate venuta à conoscere ciò, che fin quì non haueuate conosciuto. G. Hauete ragione, Piaccia à Dio, che sappia giouarmene. V. Tanto farà egli cotesto, quāto voi potrete forzare la uolontà vostra à confidarui intieramente in Dio. Et pche quanto più ferma stà la fede*

*Uscir  
di se et  
entrar i  
Dio.*

nelle nostre anime, tanto stà più feruente la charità, et quāto più feruente stà la charità tātō stà più ferma la fede, voglio Signora, che ordinariamēte rinfreschiate nella vostra memoria quelle cose, che la Chiesa cōmanda, che crediate. G. Dunque p cote-  
sto solo sarā bisogno tutto 'l dī. V. Io intendo solamente del Credo, quale voglio, che ogni dī rinfreschiate nella vostra memoria, non con dirlo p costume Il Credo.  
me con la bocca, ma con intenderlo semplicissimamente, et considerarlo con l' animo, et questo sarā l' undecimo passo. Et pche come hauete veduto p Passo.  
quello, che auātī vi dissi, nella fede è credulità, et cōfidentia nel credere le cose, che sono p venire, vi confermerete p la consideratione delle cose passate, voglio dire, che cosī come la speranza dell' effetto, che conoscete, che hā fatto la predicatione dell' euangelio di Xpo nelle psone, ui fā certa, che nel passato Iddio è stato veridico, cosī anchora vi confermerete in credere, che cosī sarā in quello, che stà per adimpire, come è la resurrettione delli morti, e 'l giudicio finale, la vita eterna, la condānatione delli mali, et la saluatione delli buoni. Nella confidenza similmente vi confermerete, et fortificherete, riducendo alla memoria vostra alcune promesse, c' hā fatto Iddio, et halle adimpite, cosī come il mādare Xpo per redentione della humana generatione. Ilche hauea promesso alli Patriarchi, et alli Propheti, et cosī come la promessa della successiōe d' Abraham,

Fiii

## ALFABETO

*La fede et la chiesa non mancheranno.*

*et venendo al testamento nuouo, vi ricorderete, che promesse X<sup>p</sup>o, che resusciterebbe, et resuscitò, promesse che manderebbe lo Spirito Santo, et mandolo, promesse, che non mancherebbe la fede nella Chiesa christiana, et nō ha mancato, promesse che starebbe con gli christiani fin all' ultimo del mondo, et fin hora è stato, stà, et starà, promesse, che quādo venisse lo Spirito Santo ne gli Apostoli, insegnerebbe loro tutta la verità, et così lo adempì. Hor trouando voi Signora, ch' egli ha adēpito tutte queste promissioni, ageuole cosa vi sarà dar credito in tutte le cose, che vi dirà. Et così quādo sentirete, che vi dice, che non tegnate sollecitudine di prouederui delle cose di questo mondo, se non che cerciate prima il Regno di Dio, et la sua giustitia, et ch' egli prouederà di tutte queste cose, lo crederete, et vi cōfiderete in lui. Et della medesima maniera quādo sentirete dire, che Christo promette di darci tutto quello, che con fidanza della sua bontà, et liberalità gli dimanderemo, terrete per certo, che vi darà ciò, che dimanderete, et se nō lo vi darà, crederete, che sia per vostra incredulità, et di questa maniera vi confermerete, et fortificherete nella fede in quanto è confidenza. Et perche così come entrando nella cognitione di Dio, et di Christo, u' innamorerete di Dio, et di Christo, et porrete tutta la confidenza vostra nelle promesse di Dio p Christo, così anchora innamorata di Dio, et di Christo, et cōfidādoui*

di Dio, et di Christo, conuiene, che per questi mezi traualichiate vno passo più auanti. Questo sarà à Passo. confermarui nella speranza della vita eterna, alla *xvi.* quale spererete di venire à godere perpetuamente *Sperāza.* di Dio, et di Christo, et questo sarà il duodecimo passo di questo camino christiano. In questa cōsideratione procurerete di disporre l'animo vostro di tal maniera, che tenga vna viuua speranza di godere di Dio nella gloria, tanto ferma, et certa, che d'essa non tenga dubbio veruno. Et sappiate certo, che tanto terrete di speranza, quanto terrete di fede, et tanto terrete di fede, quanto terrete di charità, et medesimamente tanto terrete di charità, Tre virtù christiane. quanto di fede, et tanto di fede, quanto di sprāza<sup>1</sup>, perche queste tre virtù christiane vanno sempre tanto affratellate, che l'una non stà giamai senza l'altra. Dico quando quell'una stà perfettamente, et viue perfettamente nell'anima. V.<sup>2</sup> Contentanui questi dodici passi, che u' hò mostrato? G. Potete pensare se mi contentano, il fatto sarebbe, che io stessi fuora di questi fastidij, et trauagli, nelli quali stò, come voi ben sapete, li quali mi tengono tanto alienata da me, che se in altro tempo m' haueste veduto, non mi conoscereste hora. V. Confidateui Signora in Christo, et ponetevi ad arriuare per questo camino à lui, et crediatemi, ch' egli ui aiuterà molto ampiamente à leuare tutti i fastidij vostri, et trauagli,

<sup>1</sup> sperāza (?).<sup>2</sup> V. [soverchio ?].

## ALFABETO

*Epilogò  
di passi.*

*anzi con tanto buona compagnia non è cosa in questa vita, che sia fastidiosa, ne trauagliosa, se non è vedere, che le p<sup>rs</sup>one del mōdo offendano Iddio, cōtradicano, et disprezzino la sua legge, et la sua dottrina. G. Tutto questo credo io ampiamēte, ma come si faria, che io mi ricordassi di tutto quello, che sopra questo hauete detto? V. Se nō vi ricorderete di tutto, basterà assai, che vi ricordiate di parte. Et uoglio sgannarui in questo, che io non vi dò queste regole, p<sup>che</sup> stiate legata ad esse, perche la 'ntentione mia è, che non vi seruiate di loro, se non come d' u-  
no alphabetto christiano, p mezzo del quale possiate venire alla pf<sup>et</sup>tione xpiana. Et di tutte le cose dette mi contento, che vi ricordiate, che il primo passo è, che conosciate, che il camino, p lo quale fin' hora hauete caminato, non vi potea cōdurre à Xpō. Il secondo, che tegnate volontà di caminare p questo, che senza mancare vi condurrà à Xpō. Il terzo, che vi determinate d' incominciare à caminar p esso. Il quarto, che lasciate i costumi, et cōuersationi profane, et che vi ponno separare da Dio, et che scacciate tutte le cose curiose. Il quinto, che ogni dì pigliate vn poco di tempo p entrare nella cognitione del mondo. Il sesto, che mediante questa cognitione, trauagliate disprezzare, et abhorrire il mōdo. Il settimo, che pigliate ogni dì vn poco di tempo p entrare nella cognitione di voi medesima. L' ottauo, che mediante questa cognitione, trauagliate di libe-*

*rare il cuor vostro dall' amor proprio di voi stessa. Il nono, che pigliate vn' altro poco di tempo p entrare nella cognitione di Dio, et che entriate p la cognitione di Christo. Il decimo, che mediante questa cognitione u' innamorate di Dio, p mezo di Xpo, innamorādouī medesimamēte di Christo. L' undecimo, che così p le historie del testamento vecchio, come p quelle del testamēto nuouo cōfermiate nell' anima vostra la fede, in quāto è credulità, et in quāto è confidenza. Il duodecimo, che medesimamēte cōfermiate, et fortifichiate nell' anima vostra la sperāza della vita eterna. Et perche voglio, che caminiate p questo camino come Signora, et nō come serua, come libera, et non come schiaua, con amore, et non con timore, auuertite, che non voglio, che pigliate superstitiosamēte questi pochi tempi, ch' io dico p queste considerationi, assegnādo loro più una hora, che vn' altra, o vna parte della casa vostra più, che vna altra, pche voglio, che gli pigliate con libertà d' animo all' hora, che più aggraderà, et nella parte della casa vostra, che più vi sodisfarà, et quando bene non habbiate altro tempo, mi contenterò, che pigliate quello, quādo state suegliata nel letto, et mi contenterò con quello, quādo andate passeggiādo p casa, dicendo, Pater nostri, nō intendendo, ne considerando ciò, che dite, p tenere la 'ntentione occupata nelle cose del mondo, et alle volte in fare castella in aria, che tutti questi sono tempi perduti. Et già*

*Il tēpo e  
'l luogo.*  
  
*Pater  
nostri  
senza  
pēsar-  
ui.*

## ALFABETO

vedete, che tutto quanto fin quì u' hò detto lo potrete fare senza che persona del mondo vi senta, ne intenda. Et così anchora vedete, che tutto ciò è di qualità, che nessuno lo vi potete<sup>1</sup> impedire, ne disturbare, se non solamente la malitia vostra, la vostra dimenticanza, et la trascuragine di Dio. G. Ben lo veggio, è forte cosa hauere da fermare la persona la 'ntentione sua in tante cose. V. Forte è al principio p la repugnātia, che s' hà da parte del uecchio huomo, ma in continenti si fà ageuole, come questo ua morendo. Tanto più, che non sò pche hauete da tenere p forte la consideratione ordinaria di otto cose, delle quali ben che le quattro sono insipide, l' altre quattro sono tanto amoroze, et tanto saporite, che bastano assai p fare dolci, et saporite tutte l' altre, tanto più, che queste cōsiderationi nō u' impediscono più, che li tempi perduti. G. Iddio mi dia la sua gratia, p ciò che io vò vedendo, che è ben necessario. V. Si darà à mentre, che vi conoscerete in verità, che tenete bisogno d' essa, et con questa cognitione gliele dimanderete, et sappiate, che anche questa cognitione vi viene per gratia spetiale di Dio. Hora voglio che riduciate alla memoria vostra quello, che poco è vi dissi della diuisione, che fà San Paulo de l' huomo, partendolo in huomo vecchio, et in huomo nuouo, non sò se vi ricordate bene di quello, che intorno à questo vi dissi. G. Ricordami ampiamente. V. Poi che vi ricordate senza tornarlo à ripe-

<sup>1</sup> pote o puote (?).



tere, dico Signora, che per lo essercitio mentale, del quale habbiamo ragionato nelli dodici passi, hauete da incominciare il vostro camino christiano, et dico, che l' hauete da continuare p un altro essercitio, il quale pure voglio, che sia mentale, accio che usciate con la 'ntentione vostra ad acquistare Christo senza perdere il mondo. Questo è, che stiate con continua cura, et vigilantia di mortificare in voi il vecchio huomo, et di viuificare il nuovo. Et voglio, che sappiate, che così come conoscendo voi stessa, v'è disamorerete di voi, et conoscendo Iddio, u'innamorerete di Dio, et così come quanto leuate dell' amore proprio di voi medesima, tanto giugnete dell' amore di Dio, così ne più ne meno, quanto mortificate dell' huomo vecchio, tanto viuificate dell' huomo nuovo. G. Bisogna che voi mi diciate, come hò da fare cotesta mortificatione, et viuificatione. V. Già vi dico, che facendo la mortificatione, fate parimente la viuificatione, et la mortificatione farete per la negatione della volontà, voglio dire, negando, et contrastando la volontà vostra in tutte le cose, così nelle picciole, come nelle grandi. Et sappiate certo, che senza questa negatione della volontà, in modo nessuno possiamo andare à Christo. Perche essendo la volontà nostra naturalmente inclinata ad amarsi, et à voler tutto 'l cōtrario di quello, che Christo vuole, pensate se sa-

Mortificare il vecchio huomo.

Negare la volontà nostra.

## ALFABETO

*Il digiuno.*

*rà, necessario vincerla, et negarla p seguir Christo. Et imperò dice l' istesso Christo, ch' vuol uenire appresso di me, neghi se stesso, vuol dire, neghi la sua volontà, et pigli sulle spalle la croce delli tra-uagli suoi, et pene, et seguami. Questo medesimo teneua San Paulo, quādo ci cōsiglia, che nō facciamo tutto ciò, che vogliamo, vuol dire, che neghiamo le nostre volontà. Et che s' offenda Dio con tenere intiere le volontà nostre, par bene, p quello, che dice p Esaia, parlando del digiuno, doue vna delle cose, che riprende, p le quali dice, che il digiuno nostro non è buono, è pche nel dī, che digiuniamo, tenemo intiere le nostre volontà. Et questo è pche mentre che le volontà nostre stāno intiere, il vecchio huomo stā viu, et stando il vecchio huomo viu, la carne con gli suoi appetiti, et affetti viue, et regna in noi. Et medesimamēte l' amor proprio, col quale siamo fatti Idoli di superbia, et d' arrogantia. Di maniera Signora, che in ogni modo cōuiene, che u' essercitate in qsta negatione della vostra propria volontà. G. Forte passo mi pare questo. V. Forte sarebbe p vno animo basso, plebeo, et seruile, ma per vno animo alto, generoso, et valeroso, come è quello, che Iddio hà dato à voi, non è p niente forte, anzi se bene lo considerate, è più forte cosa tenere tanto libera, et sciolta la volontà vostra, ch' ella vi porti, come con la lascia, à tutto quanto le viene voglia, perciò che questa è crudele, et incom-*

*portabile seruitù. Non vi pare ch' io habbia ragione? G. Se così potess' io fare ciò, che mi dite, come conosco, che in tutto ciò tenete gran ragiõe, vi prometto, che non sarebbe psona nel mōdo, che mi ponesse il pie innanzi in q̄sto camino xp̄iano, ma. V. Non diciate Signora p vita vostra cotesto, ma ricuperate, ricuperate animo, et non disanimate, et pēsate, che 'l peso di tutto questo non l' hauete da portare voi, ma Christo per voi, però che l' amore la vi farà ageuole, et leggiera. G. Horsu poi che s' hà da fare, non bisogna spendere parole. Ditemi come hò da fare, p negare la mia volontà. V. Quāto al primo cōuiene Signora, che tegnate questo p certificato, che il nemico vostro domestico è la vostra volontà, la quale sempre vi conuitta à cose, che vi scostino da Dio. Et pche molte volte cuopre cotali cose con manto di virtù, et santità, deliberateui Signora da hoggi auāti di nō fare, dire, ne pēsare cosa veruna di quāte la volōtà vi offerisce, senza esaminarle prima molto bene, rappresentādole allo 'ntelletto, pche egli lo verifichi con la regola della legge di Dio. Et pche tutte le cose o sono buone in se, o sono male in se, o sono indifferenti, state Signora sopra l' auiso, et quādo la volontà vi conuiterà à fare, dire, o pensare alcuna cosa, esaminatela prima, come dico, con la regola della legge di Dio, et se trouerete, che q̄lla tal cosa è mala in se, leuatela della fantasia vostra, et comandate alla volontà vo-*

*La volōtà nostra.*

*Essamina.*

## ALFABETO

*stra, che non la vi porti auanti, ad essempro di Christo, che dicendogli il Demonio, che l'adorasse, gli rispose con la legge di Dio. Dominum Deum tuum adorabis, ciò è. Adorerai il Signor Iddio tuo, come se dicesse, non ti voglio adorare, perche la legge di Dio cōmanda, che non adori, se non lui. Et se trouerete, che è buona in se, ponetela subito in opra senza p̄dere l'occasione. Et se' ui s'offerisce, et trouerete, che è indifferente, pensate vn poco in ciò, et trouando, che da quella cosa vi puote venir più male, che bene, lasciatela stare, et trouando, che vi puote venire più bene, che male, pigliatela, ma guardate bene, che nō u' ingāniate. Perche molte volte il Demonio si trasforma in Angelo di luce, et molte uolte ci muoue la carne, et pensiamo, che è lo spirito. Et se q̄lla tale cosa sarà di qualità, che in essa non possa essere ne male, ne bene, più che vna sodisfattione della vostra volontà, il lasciarla, o pigliarla importa poco, è ben vero, che sarà meglio lasciarla, perche quanto più contradite alla volontà nostra<sup>2</sup>, tanto più la mortificate. Ma mirate Signora, che dico, ch' io voglio, che facciate questa essamina continuamente, et che non vi mouiate giamai à fare, dire, ne pensare vna cosa senza fare prima queste considerationi, ch' io u' hò detto. G. Io mi sforzerò il meglio, che potrò, a ciò. Ma vorrei p̄ intendere meglio questo, che lo mi dichiaraste più, ponendolo in pratica. V. La dichiarazione vera sarà, che incominciate ad occupar-*

<sup>1</sup> Et se [quel' che] ui s' offerisce (?).

<sup>2</sup> vostra (?).

ui in questo essercitio, et con lui ìparerete più in vna settimana, che senza lui imparereste in dieci anni. G. Tuttavia giouerà molto, che mi diciate alcune particolaritadi. V. Dico Signora, che pche la volontà nostra sempre si muoue à voler alcuna cosa p vno delli cinque sentimenti corporali, conuiene, che tegnate molta guardia in loro, non lasciandoli disordinare in cosa alcuna, di tale maniera, che p gli occhi, ne per l' udito, ne per lo gusto, ne per l' odorato, ne per lo tatto possa entrare alla volontà cosa alcuna, che la possa alterare, ne perturbare. Questa guardia bisogna tenere fin à tanto, che ì sentimenti stiano tanto mortificati alle cose del mondo, che nessuna diletatione trouino in loro, et anche all' hora non bisogna, che ci trascuriamo, perche con la nostra trascuragine potrebbero ritornare à rauuiare. Et sappiate Signora, che tanto, quanto mortificherete ì vostri sentimenti esteriori; tanto viuificherete gli interiori. Et sarà certo così, che quanto manco vi diletterete in mirare le cose corporali, tanto più u' allegrerete in mirare con viuafede, et cordiale amore le cose spirituali, et quāto manco u' allegrerete d' udire le cose profane, et vane, tanto più u' occuperete in vdire, et ascoltare esteriormente la parola di Dio, et interiormente le diuine ispirationi, et così vdirete la voce di Dio, quando interiormente parlerà con l' anima vostra, et quanto manco vi diletterete con le viuande

Mortificare ì cinque sensi.

## ALFABETO

*Mortificatiõe  
d' affetti.*

*esteriori, tanto piu interiormente v' sueglierete, et auuerete per gustare le cose interiori, che sono pasti dell' anima. Et quanto manco vi piaceranno, et contenterãno gli odori corporali, tanto più, et meglio la vostra anima odorerà le cose diuine, et spiritali, et dirà à Christo, come buona sposa, Currimus in odorem vnguentorũ tuorum, cio è. Noi corriamo ne l' odore de gli vnguenti tuoi. Et quanto manco il vostro corpo s' goderà di toccare cose, che gli siano piaceuoli, et diletteuoli, tanto più l' anima vostra s' affettionerà ad inchiodarsi à piedi suoi, et le mani con Christo nella croce. Per tanto conuiene Signora, che continuamente stiate sopra l' auiso nella mortificatione di questi sentimenti esteriori, poi che conoscete, che p quella viuificate gli interiori. Insiemelemente mortificherete in voi à poco à poco il rispetto del mondo, perche in tanto istimerete più Iddio, in quanto terrete da manco il mōdo. Mortificherete ogni affetto d' ira, et ogni affetto di vendetta. Questo farete essercitandoui nella pazienza, et nella sofferenza, nella humiltà, et nel disprezzo del mondo. Et perche voglio, che queste virtudi Christiane viuano sempre nella vostra anima, voglio che di tanti in tanti dì essaminiate, et pigliate conto dall' animo vostro, per sapere, come sta ben fondato in quelle. Questo farete considerando viuamente, et in verità come riceuereste con pazienza vna auuersità, che vi auuenisse, come s' offerireste vna*

*ste vna ingiuria o grauezza, che vi fusse fatta, come comportereste, che vna persona bassa, et plebea vi precedesse, come passereste per la confusione del mondo, quando le persone d' esso ui dispreszassero, et tenessero da poco. Et insieme voglio, che u' esaminiate, come state ferma nella fede, come state certa nella speranza, come siate ardente nella charità. Questo farete pigliandoui conto, come vi confidate nelle promesse di Dio, nelle cose corporali. Perche di qui potrete giudicare, quanto vi confidate nelle cose eterne, perche in vero quello, che non si risolue di confidarsi in Dio, che lo prouederà delle cose, che appartengono al corpo senza sua sollecitudine, non sò io, come si risoluerà confidarsi in Dio, che gli darà le cose, che appartengono all' anima, et come sperate di godere di Dio nella vita eterna. Et esaminando tutte le vostre opre, se vanno dirizzate ad vtile vostro corporale, o spirituale, o dirittamente ad honore di Dio, et al bene del vostro prossimo, conoscete, che tanto state innanzi nella charità. Più voglio, che fatta questa essamina, se non trouerete gli affetti vostri, et gli sentimenti tanto mortificati, che veramente queste virtudi viuono, et regnano in voi, cò cordiale affettione mettiatè gli occhi dell' anima vostra in Christo crucifisso, et col cuore gli diciate queste, o altre somiglianti parole.*

*Deh Xpo mio fauoriscimi Signore con la tua gra-* „

G

*Oratione  
à Xpo.*

## ALFABETO

„ *tia di tale maniera, che in virtù tua vincendo queste*  
„ *affetti miei, et mortificando questi miei sentimenti,*  
„ *viuifichi, et pianti nell' anima mia queste virtudi*  
„ *christiane, di sorte, che sempre tu Signor mio viua*  
„ *in me, et io viua in te.* G. *Come m' hauete dato la*

*vita con questo. Non hauete detto quì cosa miglio-*  
*re. Ma vorrei sapere da voi, come conoscerò io,*  
*c' hò fatta cotesta mortificatione, o viuificatione.*

V. *Già u' hò detto, che questa è vna cosa, che si inco-*  
*mincia nel battesimo, et dura per tutta la vita del-*  
*l' huomo, perche mentre viue, troua sempre, che mor-*  
*tificare in sè. Perche questi affetti, et appetiti,*  
*che in noi p lo peccato originale sono sfrenati, sem-*  
*pre rinuerdiscono, et ritornano a gittare. Per tã-*  
*to vi dico, che non vi trascuriate giamai, credendo*

*Mortifi-* *hauer fatto questa mortificatione, fin che conoscia-*  
*catione.* *te, che state tanto aliena da ira, et da vendetta, che*  
*per nessuna cosa, che le persone del mondo vi fa-*  
*cessero, vi commouereste, et tanto aliena da volere,*  
*et desiderare cosa di quante tengono, et possedo-*  
*no i prossimi vostri, che innanzi vi cõtentereste, che*  
*vi pigliassero del vostro, che d' hauere non lecita-*  
*mente del loro, et tanto casta, et pura, che in voi*  
*non regni giamai pensiero dishonesto, et tanto alie-*  
*na di parlare in pregiudicio delli vostri prossimi,*  
*che stiate sempre apparecchiata per iscusargli, et*  
*difendergli. Quando habbate tutte queste cose,*  
*pensate, c' hauete mortificato l' huomo vecchio, et*



*quando conoscerete il cuore vostro tanto pieno d' amore di Dio, che nessuna cosa ama fuor di Iddio, et se alcuna n' ama, l' ama per Iddio, et quando sentirete, che nella vostra bocca, non è cosa più dolce, ne più saporita, che il nome di Dio, et quando vedrete in verità, che la vita nostra<sup>1</sup> è vno continuo Sabbatho christiano, all' hora potrete pensare, et credere, c' hauete perfettamente viuificato l' huomo nuouo, et non prima. G. Molta perfettione è cotesta, nella quale mi volete porre. V. Quando bene io volessi porui in questa perfettione, non u' harebbe da parere molto, perche poi che Iddio u' hà dato tanta perfettione nel corpo, et nell' animo secondo il mondo, non sarebbe molto, che voi vi disponeste, perche egli vi donasse anchora la perfettione dello spirito, secondo Iddio. Quāto più, che io non voglio porui così in vn tratto in quella, ma mostrolaui, et conuitoui ad essa, et priegoui, che andiate caminādo p quella à vostro bell' agio, di tal maniera, che ne la pressa vi fastidisca, ne la trascuragine vi faccia ritornare in dietro. G. Con questo mi date la vita, ben che p dirui il vero mi preme molto l' hauere da lasciare alcune cōuersationi, con le quali à tempo piglio alcun poco di piacere, et alcune cose curiose, con le quali passo il mio tempo, perche tengo timore, che s' io lascio q̄ste cose, cadrò in alcuno humore malinconico, che mi farà viuere in continua insipidezza. [V.]<sup>2</sup> Manco voglio essere tanto rigoroso, che vi*

*Cōuersationi.*

<sup>1</sup> vostra (?).

<sup>2</sup> [V ?]. Gii

## ALFABETO

*dimandì, che le lasciate tutte così in vn tratto, bene saria, che le lasciaste, ma se u' è molto molesto, le potrete lasciare à poco à poco, ma cō tale cōditione, che non vi restiate con esse, et crediate à me Signora, che come andate pigliando gusto, et sapore nelle cose di Dio, andrete tenendo per amare, et insipide le cose, nelle quali hora trouate piacere, et diletatione. G. In fine io ben veggio che u' andate commo-  
dando alla mia debilità, p nō disperarmi. V. Par-  
ui ch' io faccia male? G. Anzi mi pare che questo è  
il meglio, che facciate. V. Per cotesto vi pare be-  
ne, perche vi volete bene. Ma lasciamo stare que-  
sto, voglio Signora darui anchora piu licentia, per-  
che la difficoltà, che vi si rappresenterà in questo ca-  
mino, non vi faccia ritornare à dietro. Questa  
è, che se non potrete così intieramente mortificare gli  
affetti vostri, et gli appetiti di tal maniera, che sia-  
te assolutamente Signora di loro, almanco li rego-  
liate, et moderiate di sorte, che eglino non siano Si-  
gnori di voi. I Stoici si sognarono con non sò che  
precetti ridurre vna persona à tale, che in nessun  
modo potesse essere perturbata, ne molestata da gli  
loro affetti, ma à questo non poterono giamai ar-  
riuare. Il buono christiano non hà da cercare, ne  
procurare di mancare d' affetti, perche mai non vi  
giungerà, ne è bene, che vi giunga, ma dee cercare  
d' essere Signore de gli affetti suoi, di tale maniera,  
che le sue perturbationi, et le sue molestie in nessun*

*Gli af-  
fetti.*

*modo lo possano separare da Dio. Questo dico cōsiderādo, che l' Apostolo San Paulo sentendo queste perturbationi, et queste molestie diceua. Infelix ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis huius? cìd è. Infelice io huomo, chi mi libererà del corpo di questa morte? Questo diceua egli sentendosi molestato, et perturbato da gli affetti suoi, et imperò desideraua essere libero dalla prigione del corpo, ben che era tanto signore, et tanto superiore de gli affetti suoi, che se ben lo sollecitauano, mai non lo precipitauano. Lo imperfetto christiano, sente piu queste perturbationi, et queste molestie, però che stà piu lontano dalla mortificatione del vecchio huomo. Et così, anchora che non è signore de' suoi affetti, non lasciādosì signoreggiare da loro, cadēdo, et leuandosi, et altra volta scapucciando, et nō cadendo, camina à Christo, et pur che tenga sempre la 'ntentione sua dirizzata à Christo, ageuolmente gli perdona Iddio i suoi scapucci, et le sue cadute. Quelli, che non sentono queste molestie, ne queste perturbationi, sono quelli, che in tal modo s' hanno lasciato signoreggiare da li loro affetti, che senza contradittione veruna sfrenatamente corrono appresso ad essi. Questi tali non voglio io ponere nel numero di christiani, per non fare questa ingiuria al vangelo di Iesu Christo. Hora pche la guerra contra gli affetti è malageuole, et molto più cōtra gli interiori, contra li quali voi hauete à com-*

Giii

## ALFABETO

Vno  
Christo  
in me-  
moria.

*battere, voglio Signora, che totalmente mettiatene nella vostra memoria vno Christo crocifisso, il quale portiate sempre, et in ogni luogo innanzi di voi, per testimonio di tutte le vostre opre, parole, et pensieri, et per scuto, con cui riparararui contra gli assalti, che vi daranno gli affetti vostri, et gli appetiti, et son certo, che in questo modo non farete, ne direte, ne pēserete cosa che sia cōtra la legge di Dio, perche haurete vergogna d' essere veduta da Christo, che portate con voi. Et benché al principio nō lo possiate portare così continuamente, col tempo son certo, che lo potrete fare molto facilmete, anzi vi dico, che vi sarà molto piaceuole, et saporita questa tale compagnia. G. Io così lo credo, et così spero in Dio, che me lo concederà. V. Anchora voglio Signora da voi questo, che nessuna notte u' addormentiate senza esaminare prima, in che opre, in che parole, et in che pensieri hauete speso quel dì, incominciando dalla mattina, et continuando fine alla notte, et esaminando così le cose picciole, come le grandi, perche chi si lascia vincere nelle cose picciole, meglio si lascerà vincere nelle grandi. Et voglio, che per lo tempo male speso, et male acquistato riprendiate voi medesima con tutto 'l cuore, conoscendo in verità di ciò essere stato cagione la vostra mala inclinatione, et proponendo di tenere l' altro giorno piu cura, et piu vigilanza sopra di voi, et voglio, che per lo ben spero dia-*

Essami-  
na di  
notte.

*te gratie à Dio, conoscendo veramente, che ciò, che è di buono in voi, è dono di Dio, et ciò, che è di male, è del vostro capitale. Et quando fusse possibile fare questa essamina con vna persona spirituale, il frutto sarebbe senza dubbio molto maggiore, ma mi contento con che lo facciate da voi sola. Et perche anchora alle buone opere molte volte ci mouiamo non puramente per Christo, ma per alcuni disegni, et contentamenti della nostra sensualità, di tale maniera, che non ci porta a quelle l'amore di Dio, ma l'amore proprio, voglio Signora, che anchora di quelle, che vi parranno buone opere, sospettiate, et che con questo sospetto le esaminiate molto bene, perche se fusse possibile, vorrei, che à tutte quelle vi moueste pura, et sinceramente per amore di Dio, et crediatemi, che è tanto interiore questo ribaldo dell' amore proprio, che in tutte le cose vuole la sua parte. Et imperò non vorrei, che vi contentaste con tagliarlo, ma desidero, che dalla radice lo suegliate del cuore vostro sì, che in nessun modo ritorni à crescere. Più voglio, che sempre, che parlerete con alcuna persona spirituale, le comunichiate, et facciate parte di tutte le cose, che vi passeranno per la fantasia, et di tutti i vostri pensieri, perche se la persona è tale, vè saprà dire sopra ciascuna cosa tali parole, che voi resterete molto sodisfatta, et molto contenta. Et voglio anchora, che à tutte le persone spirituali, che conuer-*

Giiii

## ALFABETO

*seranno con voi, diate licenza, che senza dimādar-  
gliele voi, ui dicano ciò, che sentiranno, et conosce-  
ranno di voi nelle vostre parole, et nelle vostre  
opere. Anzi voglio, che non solamente loro diate  
licenza per questo, ma che le preghiate et carichiate  
molto, che così lo facciano. Et sappiate certo, che  
di questo sentirete vno merauiglioso frutto spiritua-  
le. Vltimamente voglio Signora, che di tanti in  
tāti di rinfreschiate nella vostra memoria la imagi-  
ne, et idea della perfettione christiana della manie-  
ra, che quì l' habbiamo dipinta, et che ponendo essa  
da vna parte, et ponendo dall' altra quello, che in  
questo camino christiano haurete acquistato, consi-  
deriate bene quanto da presso, o quanto lontano vi  
trouate à quella imagine di perfettione, et trouan-  
doui di lontano, voglio che con vno impeto amo-  
roso, et con vna efficace confidenza vi riuoltiate à  
Christo crucifisso, et gli diciate col cuore. Deh  
Christo Iesu Dio mio, et Signor soffia, soffia Signor  
„ mio nell' anima mia il vento dello Spirito Sāto  
„ tanto efficacemente, che con merauiglioso impeto  
„ la porti senza fermarsi, fin che intieramente si troui  
„ tutta trasformata in questa perfettiōe christiana, che  
„ tengo innanzi à gli occhi miei. Questo è Signora  
il libro, nel quale desidero, che voi continuamente  
leggiate, perche in esso imparerete piu in vn giorno,  
che in tutti quanti sono nel mōdo potrete impa-  
rare in cento anni. Anzi dico, che tutto il buono,*

Oratio-  
ne.

Letzione.

*che stà scritto, in tanto si gusta, et intende, in quāto l' animo di quello, che legge stà disposto in questo modo, tanto che anchora la sacra scrittura è veleno all' animo, che non tiene questa humile dispositione, la quale io desidero, che voi habbiate, anzi voglio, che totalmente l' habbiate, poi che m' hauete promesso, che s' io vi pongo in vno camino secreto, per lo quale andiate à Dio senza essere veduta dal mōdo, caminerete per quello. Et se quello, ch' io u' hò mostrato non è di questa qualità, son contento, che non m' adempiate la parola vostra. G. Anzi mi pare tanto secreto, che in lui non ritruouo altra difficoltà maggiore, che il secreto, nō perche nō mi paia molto buono, ne perch' io tenga altra volontà di quella, che teneua prima di caminare per esso, ma perche è tanto interiore, che come non gli trouo il verso, ne lo veggo con gli occhi del corpo, non sò se indouinerò à caminare p esso. V. Se non gli trouate il verso, è perche anchora non hauete incominciato à caminarui. Incominciate, et vedrete se gli trouerete il verso. Et se non lo vedete con gli occhi del corpo, aprite gli occhi dell' anima, et vedretelo. Et sappiate certo, che da tenere chiusi questi procedono tutti i mali, et peccati, nelli quali le persone cadono in questa presente vita, et non pensate, che non indouinate à caminarui, perche lo indouinerete, confidādoui però in Christo, et diffidandoui di voi stessa, perche per quindi hauete da entrare, et per quindi*

## ALFABETO

Honor  
del  
môdo.

Sodis-  
sfattiôe  
di cose  
esteriori.

hauete da continuare il camino vostro. Et pche trà l'altre cose, che in lui vi s'offeriranno per impedirui, et disturbarloui, l'honore, e'l rispetto del mondo senza cōparatione alcuna impediscono piu, che tutte l'altre, et così credo certo che porta molto più anime allo 'nferno, che altro qualūque affetto humano, voglio Signora, che vi psuadiate che 'l dishonor vostro, e'l vostro honore depende da voi sola, di tal maniera, che solamente le vostre male opre vi pōno dishonorare, et solamēte le vostre buone opre vi pōno honorare. Et in q̄sto modo nō ponendo l'honore vostro in mano, ne in cortesia delle psone del môdo, nō haurete occasiōe, ne disperare da loro l'honor, ne di temere da loro il dishonore, et con q̄sto cōuerserete, et tratterete con loro cō molta libertà, et molto dominio interiore. Questa è una cosa, che dicēdola pare molto fàcile, et vi prometto, che è tanto difficile, che beato q̄llo, che si pone à farla, et beatissimo colui, che esce cō lei. Et pche dopò q̄sto rispetto del môdo la cosa, che piu impedisce le psone, che vogliono caminare p questo camino xp̄iano, è la falsa psuasione, che ci habbiamo fatto, credendo, che nelle cose esteriori possiamo trouare sodisfattiōe, et cōtētezza, voglio Signora, che contra questa falsa persuasione andiate armata cō vna certa, ferma, et vera opinione. Questa è, che certifichiate il vostro animo, che in nessuna cosa di q̄lle, che voi non potete acquistare da voi medesima senza terza psona, ne manco di



quelle, che le psone del mōdo vi pōno dare, o togliere, potrà giamai trouare intiera cōtentezza, o felicità acquistandole, ne scontentezza, o infelicità pden-  
 dole. Et sarà così, che come nō spererete trouare  
 sodisfattione ne felicità in ricchezze, ne in stati, ne Ric-  
 nell' altre cose che 'l mōdo, et le persone del mondo chezze.  
 danno, et togliono, ne p infelicità essere priuata di  
 quello, col quale vi trouate, non solamente non desi-  
 dererete ciò, che nō hauete, ma possederete di tal modo  
 ciò c' hauete, che quando vi fusse tolto, nō pēsereste  
 hauere pduto niente. Questa medesima cōsidera-  
 tione potete stendere alli parenti, a gli amici, et  
 anche alla vostra propria persona, perche stando in  
 questo presupposito, ne desidererete la sanità del  
 corpo, ne temerete la infermità, ne desidererete la  
 vita, ne temerete la morte, poi che ne l' uno stà in  
 mano vostra di conseruarlo, ne l' altro potete fuggire.  
 Nō dico, che vi facciate tanto insensibile, che non sen-  
 tiate questi affetti, ma dico, che di tale modo gli  
 mortifichiate, che anchora, che l' animo vostro si ri-  
 senta non s' alteri, ne si perturbi. G. Questo mi pare  
 anchora, piu malageuole, che l' altro. V. Hor sappiate  
 Signora, che questa consideratione, et l' altra hō io  
 imparata da vn Philosopho gentile. Il quale per  
 queste cose tanto difficili come vedete<sup>1</sup>, non cercaua,  
 se non, non sò che tranquillità d' animo. Hora pen-  
 sate voi se hāno ad essere malageuoli ad vn animo  
 christiano, che le piglia per caminare piu sbrigato à

<sup>1</sup> voi dite (?).

## ALFABETO

Ambi-  
tione.

*Christo, et per uscire di se piu tosto, et piu dalla radice, per entrare in Christo. Et imperò vi supplico Signora, che prima, che vi mettiate ad essercitare in quelle, non le habbiate per difficili. G. Gran cosa è hauere la persona à spogliarsi di questi affetti naturali, li quali à pena si conoscono. V. Io vi dirò, che è tanto grande, che sentendo David la difficoltà, che è non solamente in dispogliarsi di loro, ma in intendergli, et conoscerli, priega Iddio, che 'l netti delle sue cose occulte, et secrete, che sono questi affetti, et aggiunge subito, et fà, che il tuo seruo non sia vinto dall' ambitione. Cōsideraua il Sāto Profeta, che tra gli affetti interiori, et secreti l' ambitione così come è piu naturale all' huomo, così è piu dannosa, et è piu secreta. Et perciò tanto spetialmente dimanda à Dio aita per vincerla. G. Cō ragione. Et però vi dico con verità, che la cosa, che piu timore mi dona quando penso in caminare per questo camino, che m' insegnate, è che hauendo sempre vdito dire, che Iddio castiga con tentationi, et persecutioni quelli, che giungono à lui, et trouandomi io molto debile per soffrirle, et resistere loro, penso, che non potrò perseuerare. V. Piacemi, che m' habbiate detto questo, perche son certo, che facendoui voltare il foglio, et leggere piu auanti di cotesto, c' hauete vdito dire, pderete il timore, c' hauete. Perche di cotesto tātō Sā Paulo u' assecura, dicendo à gli paurosi, come voi, che Iddio è giusto,*

*et fedele, et che non consentirà in modo alcuno, che siamo tentati, ne castigati piu di quello, al quale le forze nostre potranno resistere, et anche in questo dice, che ci aiuterà con la sua gratia, perche più ageuole, et leggiermente à ciò resistiamo. Di maniera Signora, che potete tenere per certo, che nella presente vita non pmitte Iddio, che vno suo sia più tentato, più castigato, ne più perseguitato di quanto conosce, che li basterà l' animo, à fare resistenza. Et così à gli piu forti promette forti tentationi, castighi, et persecutioni, et cō debili si porta piaceuolmente. L' essemplio di questo habbiamo in Iob, che Iob. dal Demonio per permissione di Dio fù tentato, et perseguitato quanto era bastante la patientia sua di sopportare. Ma mirate, che sempre hebbe Iddio la mano al Demonio, che non gli toccasse nella vita, et così per questo, come per quello, che dice Dauid, che le consolationi, che Iddio interiormente mandaua all' anima sua, erano secondo le afflittioni, et angoscie, nelle quali era tormentata, vi potete confermare in questa verità, che Iddio castiga, et affliga i suoi tanto, quanto vede, che potranno comportare, et non più. Di maniera, che per questo tanto non douete lasciar di pigliare questa christiana impresa, et pigliata, perseuerare in quella, fine all' usare<sup>1</sup> gagliardamente con lei, poi che è così, che come dice San Paulo, non riceuono corona di gloria, se non quelli, che caminando p questo camino, com-*

<sup>1</sup> uscire (?).

## ALFABETO

*battono contra gli auuersarij loro valentemente.*

*G. La vita m' hauete dato con questo, perche vi prometto, ch' io era fortemente tentata da questo timore.*

*V. Sempre Signora, che vi verranno somiglianti cose alla fantasia, pēsate, che sono per opra del Demonio, et resistete loro sempre col scudo della fede, et se con questo non potrete disfare vna tale imaginatione, comunicatela liberamente con alcuna psona spirituale, che veggiatè voi, che la saprà intēdere, et intesa, saprà soccorrerui in quella. G. Di tali persone è hoggi tanta carestia, come di mosche bianche. V. Tanto piu hauete voi di che render gratie à Dio, poi che vi hà posto in istato, che in costea carestia, che dite, hauerete quello, che vi sarà.*

*Leggere  
cose  
curiose.*

*Anchora voglio vn altra cosa da voi. Rimaneteui, che per hora non u' occupiate in leggere, ne in voler sapere cose curiose, anchora che siano sante, di maniera, che il vostro intelletto curiosamente si occupi in quelle. Perche p questo principio ui seruirà molto piu la lettione di cose semplicissime, che u' infiammino la volontà, et crediate à me, che non vi dico questo senza molta ragione. Et pche in questo esercitio xpiano son certo, che conoscerete per isperienza la verità di quello, che quì hauete vdito da me, et altre molte verità di christianissime, et perche hò veduto per isperienza, che molte persone subito che le conoscono, le vanno parlando, et comunicando senza consideratione alcuna, donde na-*

*Non  
prati-  
care con  
psone.*

scono alcuni inconuenienti, guardate Signora, che in tal caso vi sappiate gouernare sauamente, et procurate di fare come le pecore buone, che mostrano al pastore l'herba, che mangiano nella lana, et nello latte, che gli danno, et non come le triste, che glie le mostrano tornandola à gittare per la bocca. Et faccioui sapere, che la dottrina cotta, et digesta nello animo fà il suo frutto, et che quella, la qual subito esce per la bocca, non pasce l'animo, et io desidero, che voi teniate la dottrina nell'anima, et non in cima della lingua. G. Bene stà aiutimi Iddio à tutto, et voi medesimamente aiutatemi *Adornare l'huomo interiore.* à componere l'huomo esteriore, poi che tanto bene mi hauete mostrato come hò d'adornare lo 'interiore. V. Adornate voi Signora primamète lo 'nteriore, et io vi prometto, che non hauete necessità del mio consiglio, ne di quello di persona del mondo, p componere l'esteriore. Et perche mi crediate questo, voglio mostrarloui per vna similitudine, et s'ella sarà alquãto da schifare, dissimulatelo. Quãdo vn *Côparatione.* buono medico vuol sanare vn corpo rognoso, non incomincia à curarlo, radendogli la rogna di fuori, pche conôsce, che se bene p allhora la lieua, subito ritorna ad vscire l'altro<sup>1</sup> di nuoua. Ne meno incomincia à curarlo con vntione pche conosce, che quantunque la lieui nella parte di fuori, s'entra dètro del corpo, et è cagione d'altra maggiore infermità. Ma se quel tale è buono Medico isperimentato, la pri-

<sup>1</sup> altra di nuouo (?).

## ALFABETO

Cerimonie.

ma cosa, che fà, è cōsiderare la cagione, donde procede la cotal rognà, et intesa, fà ch'l patiente o rognoso pigli per la bocca quelle medicine, che conosce essere al proposito per sanare quella indispositione del corpo, donde procede la rognà, pche conosce, et sà, che sanata la indispositione interiore, senza difficoltà alcuna si cade la rognà esteriore. Della medesima maniera vno medico spirituale quādo vuole sanare vn corpo vitioso, o licentioso, non hà da incominciare, leuando le superfluitadi esteriori, perche come resta dentro la radice del vitio, subito tornano ad vscire l'altre, se non per quella medesima parte, per altra forse più pericolosa. Ne meno hà da incominciare con vntioni di cerimonie superstitiose, et opre esteriori, le quali anchora che lievinò i vitij esteriori, mettongli nello 'nteriore, et così la infermità è più pericolosa, et più pernitiōsa. Ma se è medico isperimentato veduti i vitij, et considerate le superfluitadi esteriori, conosce la cagione, donde procedono, et conosciuta, pone le medicine, che gli pare essere necessarie per sanare la infermità interiore, perche sà certo, che sanata, subito i vitij, et superfluitadi cessano. Intendete ciò, ch'io voglio dire? G. Ampiamente, et anchora, che habiate parlato vn poco di cose lorde, perche l'hauete detto bene, vel sopporto. Et poi che non mi volete dire niente di questo, almanco ditemi, come mi gouernerò nelle cose deuote esteriori. V. Pigliate questa deuotione

deuotione interiore, ch'io u' offerisco, et ella ui gouernerà in ogni altra, ma dichiaratemi, di quali deuotioni esteriori intendete. G. La messa, la predica, la lettione, la oratione, il digiuno, la confessione, la communione, et la limosina. Di ciascuna di queste cose vorrei, che in ogni modo mi diceste così briueamente il parere vostro intorno del modo, c' hò da tenere in essercitarmi in quelle, et non u'iscusate, pche nō u' ammetterò iscusa veruna. V. In fine voi Signora volete esser sempre obedita, et hauete ragione. Per tanto dico, che douete vdire la messa cō molta attentione. Et perche in quella sono tre cose *La messa.* principali, la adoratione del santissimo sacramento, la dottrina della epistola, et del vangelo, et le orationi, potrete trahere frutto da tuttatre. Da la adoratione traherete vn nuouo, et feruente desio d' incorporarui p fede, et amore nella passione di Xpo, et d'uccidere il vostro vecchio huomo per Christo, et di risuscitare il vostro nuouo huomo con Christo. Dalla dottrina piglierete sempre alcuna cosa, doue pensare quel giorno. In questo modo, Se vдите, che 'l prete dice il Vangelo, che incomincia, In principio erat verbū, quādo giunga a quello, dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri, ijs qui credūt in nomine eius, che vuol dire, Iddio diede facultà, et potestà, perche fussero figliuoli di Dio tutti quelli, che credono nel nome suo, vi potrete restare pensando nella somma bontà, et misericordia di

H

## ALFABETO

*Dio, con la quale chiama vna così vile creatura ad vna tanto alta, et eccellente diuinità, come è, l'essere figliuola di Dio, et questo solamente per credere in Xpo. Medesimamente se vdite leggere quella epistola di San Paulo, che incomincia. Hoc sentite in vobis, quod in Christo Iesù, qui cum in forma Dei esset etc. che vuol dire, Fate fratelli, che gli animi vostri habbiano il medesimo disprezzo del mondo, et della sua propria istimatione, che conoscete c' hebbe Xpo Iesù, il quale essendo figliuolo di Dio, s' humiliò a pigliare habito di seruo, col quale conuersò quà nel mondo, procurate di restarui pensando nella profonda humilità di Xpo, di tale maniera, che questo pensiero confonda la vostra superbia, et v' faccia tutta humile, desiderosa d' imitare la humilità, et la mansuetudine di Christo. In questo modo potrete raccogliere sempre dalla epistola, o dal Vangelo alcuna consideratione, con cui restarui. G. Già lo 'ntendo. Seguite piu innanzi. V. Dalle orationi piglierete occasione d' alzare la vostra anima a Dio, pregandolo interiormente, che accetti quello, che il Sacerdote in nome di tutta la Chiesa gli dimanda. G. Et parui, ch' io debba vdire messa ogni dì? V. Di quelli di festa, se è possibile, non ne lasciate, nessuno de gli altri, lascerete solamente quelli, che occupata in alcuna opra di charità, non la potreste vdire senza separarui da quella. Ad vdire la predica an-*

*Messa  
ogni dì.*



*drete con l' animo humile, et obediante, come se andaste ad vdire Christo. Et quando vdirete dire dal predicatore alcuna cosa, che vi paia buona, con vna secreta oratione pregate Iddio, che la imprima nella vostra memoria, et vi dia la sua gratia, et fauore, con cui possiate mettere in effetto. G. Et se il predicatore è di quelli che s' usano per lo mōdo, che non predicano Christo, ma cose vane, et curiose, o di Philosophia, et di nō sò che Theologie, o di suoi sogni, et fauole, volete ch' io vado ad udirlo? Predicatore vano.*

*V. In questo tanto voi farete, come meglio vi parerà, di me vi sò dire, che in tutto l' anno non tengo peggiori tempi, che quelli, che io perdo in vdire alcuni predicatori di quelli, che voi sauamente hauete dipinti, et così gli odo poche volte. G. Cotesto è nō volerui essercitare nella virtù della patienza. V. Sia che si voglia, che io vorrei nel pgolo vdir predicare Christo, se fusse possibile. E ben vero, che tutta volta per tristo, che sia il predicatore, è bene udirlo, se non p altro, pche veduta la necessità, che l' anime xpiane tengono d' udire la dottrina di Christo, u' infiammate a dimandare ardentissimamente a Christo, che mandi nella chiesa sua predicatori, che predichino, et insegnino pura, et sinceramente la sua santissima dottrina. La lettione, già u' hò detto, che per hora vorrei, che fusse di cose semplicissime, che u' infiammassero la volontà, et non u' occupassero lo 'ntelletto. Et quando leggerete in*

Hii

## ALFABETO

Nella  
sacra  
scrittura.

*cose della sacra scrittura, hauete da pensare, che parla Iddio con voi, et perciò hauete d'andare a quella con animo humile et obediante, et pensare, che leggete, non p saper ragionare, ma per intèdere come hauete da viuere. Nella sacra scrittura hauete da cercare medicina còtra le tentationi, ad essemplio di Christo, che essendo tentato dal Demonio nel deserto, a ciascuna delle sue tentationi gli rispose con vn detto della sacra scrittura. Nella medesima hauete da cercare rimedio contra le auuersitadi, contra le persecutioni, et trauagli del mondo, perche come dice San Paulo, tutto quello, che è scritto là,*

Libri da  
leggere.

*è scritto per nostra dottrina. G. Che libri sono quelli, che voi chiamate semplicissimi? V. Di quelli, che io usai vn tempo sono vn libretto, che chiamano, de imitatione Christi, et l'altro di Cassiano, et quello di San Girolamo delle vite degli Eremiti, et penso, che tutti questi siano in volgare.*

La ora-  
tione.

*Questo è quanto alla lettione. La oratione è vna solleuatiõe d'animo a Dio con desiderio d'acquistare da lui ciò, che gli dimanda. Il modo d'orare, et quello che s'hà da dimandare nella oratione, è come lo ci insegna Xpo per San Matheo, dicendo, Quando vorrete fare oratione, non farete come „ gli hipocriti, li quali usano di orare nelli circoli „ delle genti, et nelli cantoni delle piazze, p esser ve- „ duti da gli huomini, et dicoui la verità, che gia que „ tali riceuono il loro guiderdone. Tu dunque quādo*

*vorrai orare, entrati nella tua camera, et chiusa la „  
 tua porta, fà la tua oratione al tuo Padre q̃llo, che „  
 stà in secreto, et tuo Padre quello che stà in secreto „  
 lo ti rimunererà in pubblico. Per q̃ste parole c' inse- „  
 gna X̃po, che l' oratione nostra hà da essere secreta,  
 s' p fuggire l' ambitione, come pche l' animo quieto  
 nello esteriore, più ageuolmente s' acqueta nello 'nte-  
 riore. Et dice incontinenti X̃po, et quando orerete,  
 non spendiate molte parole, come fanno i Gentili.  
 Doue dimostra, che vuole nella oratiõe poche parole,  
 ma molta fede, et molta affettione. Dapoi dice, p  
 tanto voi orerete di questa maniera. Pater noster,  
 q̃ es in cœlis, etc. doue c' insegna, che nella oratione  
 nō habbiamo a dimā dare cose curiose, ne supflue,  
 ma solamēte q̃lle, che ci parerāno necessarie p la glo-  
 ria di Dio, p la salute dell' anime delli nostri pros-  
 simi, et nostre, et p sostētare le vite nostre. Il come  
 habbiamo d' orare c' insegna in vn altro luogo X̃po  
 dicendo, tutto quello, che dimanderete con fidanza, vi  
 sarà dato. Di modo, che, perche la oratione sia buo-  
 na, hà da essere in secreto, con poche parole, et con  
 molto affetto, et con honesta et giusta dimanda, et  
 con intiera fede, et confidanza, che Iddio ci darà  
 q̃llo, che gli dimāderemo. Anchora c' insegna X̃po  
 in vn' altro luogo, che siamo importuni, et che pse-  
 ueriamo nella oratione. Et perche la oratione vocale  
 molte volte accende, et inalza l' animo all' ora-  
 tione mentale, non vorrei Signora, che vi obligaste*

Hiii

## ALFABETO

a certo numero di Salmi, o di Pater nostri, accioche steste sempre libera, pche mandandoui Iddio nella oratione alcuna bona inspiratione, vi poteste dimorare in quella tanto, quanto sentiste, che l'anima vostra la gusta. G. Questo non lo 'ntendo, se non lo mi dichiarate p alcuno essemplio. V. Voglio dire, che se dicendo il Pater noster, venite a dire, adueniat regnū tuū, et in quel luogo Iddio vī mostrerà la felicità, che l'animo hà quādo regna Iddio in quella, che vi fermiate in q̃lla cōsideratione. Et della „ medesima maniera, che se dicēdo, cor mundū crea „ in me Deus, et spiritum rectum innona<sup>1</sup> in viceribus mei, ciò è, Crea in me Dio il Cuor mondo, et „ rinoua nelle viscere mie lo spirito dritto, sentirete, che 'l cuor vostro incomincia ad infiammarsi con desio di quella nettezza, et le vostre viscere s' incominciano ad aprire, ansiose, che q̃llo spirito Sāto sia in esse rinouato, senza passar più auanti con vn pēsiero di Christo crocifisso, accresciate il fuoco del cuor vostro, et apriate più le porte delle vostre viscere, perche egli resti netto, et elle vadano piene dello Spirito Santo. Questo farete così non vi hauendo obligata a certo numero di Salmi, o di Pater nostri. Intendetelo hora? G. Ampiamente. V. Il digiuno in quanto è astinenza, dipende dalla sacra scrittura, et serue alla charità. Per tanto lascerò sempre in vostra discretione, che facciate tanta astinenza, quanta conoscerete esserui necessa-

<sup>1</sup> innoua (?).

ria per distruggere il vecchio huomo, et viuificare il nuouo, et sarò sempre di parere, c' habbiate a statuire l'astinenza piu tosto nella quantità delle uiuande, che nella qualità, et di questa maniera potrete sempre, che vorrete, digiunare, senza che nessuno lo senta. Quanto alli digiuni della chiesa, farete come fanno gli altri, che in questo non ui dō regola alcuna. Ben vi voglio auisare di q̄sto che se i precetti, come dicono, obligano secōdo la 'ntentiōe di quello, che gli diede, io penso, che pochi sono quelli, che adēpiano il precetto del digiuno. G. Perche? V. Perche pochi adēpiono lo effetto, che la chiesa volse, che acquistassero col digiuno. G. Donde sapete voi cotesta intentione della Chiesa? V. Per quello, che canta nel prefatio tutta la Quaresima dicendo, Qui corporali ieiunio vitia comprimis, mentē eleuas, virtutē largiris et premia, cio è, Tu Dio, il quale col digiuno corporale raffreni i vitij, inalzi la mente, doni la virtù, et i premij. Donde pare, che la Chiesa volse, che per mezo del digiuno noi xpiani mortificassimo gli appetiti sensuali, che cì incitano alli vitij, et che inalzassimo l'anime nostre a Dio, pche fussero guiderdonate con p̄mij di virtudi christiane. La confessione è vna cosa tanto La cō-  
spirituale, et interiore, che potete Signora credere, fessiōe.  
che se leggete tutto quanto è scritto di lei, et se vdite parlar di lei da gli Angeli del cielo, non finirete di saperui bene confessare, se prima Iddio non

Hiii

## ALFABETO

*muoue il cuor vostro alla cognitione della vostra dapocagine et miseria, accioche u' humiliate dināzi al cospetto della sua diuina Maiestà, et allumi<sup>1</sup> il vostro intelletto, et infiammi<sup>2</sup> la vostra volontà alla cognitione della sua infinita bontà, et misericordia, accioche cordialmente crediate in Christo, et amiate Christo. Questa verità voglio Signora, che la vi persuadiate, accioche quando Iddio toccherà il cuor vostro, et mouerà la vostra volontà, dandoui cognitione, che per li peccati vostri hauete perduto la gratia sua, et generādoui horrore di quelli, et desio di confessargli, per ritornare a recuperare la gratia sua, essendo certa, che questo non lo potete saper fare senza fauore, et gratia di Dio, intrinsecamente vi raccomandiate a lui supplicādo, che apra gli occhi dello 'ntelletto vostro, acciò che con verità vi conosciate, et allumi gli occhi dell' anima vostra, acciò che intieramēte vi cōfidiare in Xpo, et ardētemēte amiate Xpo. Questo è il primo apparecchio, che douete fare p confessarui, et pche come u' hò detto, alla confessione s' hà d' andare con profōda humilità, et cō ferma fede, et ardente charità cōuiene Sig. che alla humilità andiate p la cognitiōe di voi medesima, nella quale douete entrare profundamēte della maniera, che già u' hò detto, et che alla fede, et charità andiate p la cognitione di Dio, nella quale u' esserciterete cō le cōsiderationi, che poco fà hauete vdito. G. Ben vorrei, che la mi tor-*

<sup>1</sup> alluma (?).

<sup>2</sup> infiamma (?).

naste a ripetere, se nō fusse tardi. V. Basterà, che voi medesima da voi sola le riduciate a vostra memoria. Fatto q̄sto secōdo apparecchio, voglio Signora, che esaminiate bene gli affetti vostri, et che cose u' incitano, che siano di qualità, che vi possano separare da Dio. Questa essamina farete, ponēdo ui innāzi la legge di Dio intesa della maniera, che quì habbiamo ragionato. Dopd̄ q̄sto voglio, che ponendo da vna parte quegli affetti disordinati, c' hauete conosciuto in voi, et dall' altra parte la legge di Dio, riduciate alla memoria uostra gli essercitii, c' hauete tenuti, le cose, nelle quali u' hauete occupato, i negocij, c' hauete trattati, le psone, con le quali hauete conuersato, et quelle delle quali hauete ragionato, i libri, nelli quali hauete letto, i disegni, c' hauete fatto, e i pensieri, nelli quali u' hauete diletato, et voglio in tutte q̄ste cose: pigliādole vna p vna, esaminiate, che è q̄llo, c' hauete fatto, detto, d̄ pēsato, che sia, o possa essere contra la legge di Dio, cominciādo dal primo giorno, et discorrendo fine al dī, che vi volete confessare. Et voglio piū, che esaminiate anchora quello, che in tutto questo tempo hauete lasciato di fare, dire, d̄ pensare, che hauria potuto ridōdare in honore di Dio, et in vtilità dell' anima uostra, et in guadagno spirituale, o tēporale delli prossimi vostri. Che così come in q̄llo, che pecchiamo p cōmettere, mostriamo la nostra iniquità, et scopriamo il nostro malo animo con Dio, et con li pros-

Omissione.

## ALFABETO

*simi nostri, così ne piu ne meno in q̃llo che pecciamo per omissione, appalesiamo la nostra poca fede, et manco charità, e 'l poco rispetto, et amore, che tenemo a Dio, et al prossimo, et come habbiam detto, siamo obligati ad amare Iddio sopra tutte le cose, e 'l prossimo, come uoi' medesimi. Fatti q̃sti apparecchi, et sentèdo l'anima vostra già humiliata p la cognitione della sua propria malitia, et malignità, et molto ferma nella fede, et molto infiammata nella charità, cō grādissimo horrore de vostri peccati, et sentendo la molestia de gli affetti vostri, vi porrete a piede<sup>2</sup> del confessore, portando quelli<sup>3</sup>, istesso sdegno contra a voi medesima, et sentèdo quella istessa cōfusione, che se fuste a dimandare perdono ad vno gran Prencipe, dal quale haueste riceuto grādissimi beneficij, et al quale malignamēte haueste fatto terribili tradimenti. Et così con q̃sta tale preparatione abbattendo, et gittando p terra la presontione, et arroganza humana, chiara, et apertamēte gli discoprirete tutte le cose, nelle quali conoscerete hauere disobito<sup>4</sup> a Dio per malitia, per ignoranza, per trascuragine, et per debolezza. Et se 'l cōfessore è persona, che senta, et gusti le cose spirituali, voglio che gli appalesiate, et discopriate gli affetti, che vi muouono, inclinano et portano alle offese et peccati, pche essendo egli tale, ṽ darà tal consiglio, col quale gli possiate mortificare. G. Mai nō vd̃ dire tal cosa in mia uita, che de gli af-*

*Cōfessur  
gli  
affetti.*

<sup>2</sup> noi (?).    <sup>3</sup> piedi (?).    <sup>4</sup> quell' (?).    <sup>4</sup> disobedito (?).



*fetti hò da confessarmi. V. Se non gli vorrete cōfessare al Sacerdote, cōfessategli a Dio, dicendo con David, Quoniā iniquitatem meam ego cognosco, et più, Ecce enim iniquitatibus conceptus sum, et in peccatis concepit me mater mea, cio è, Perche io conosco la mia iniquità, et più: Ecco pche son „ conceputo nelle iniquità, et nelli peccati m' hà con- „ ceputo la madre mia. Et tanto Signora, quanto più „ di male vi si fà confessare, che viuono in voi questi affetti, tanto più: et meglio gli douete confessare, perche più abbassate la vostra naturale arrogāza: et così vi esserciterete più nella virtù della humilità. Et auuertite Signora: che non voglio: che siate superstitiosa: ne scrupulosa nella confessione, perche Nō al Sacerdote vi basta confessare quelle cose: che uoi perstio- conoscete hauer fatto con animo disobediēte a Dio, sa. delle quali vi dolete tanto: che conoscendo: che potete viuere senza farle, tenete fermo proposito et deliberatione di non farle giamai: ma delli difetti: senza li quali a pena si viue in questa presente vita: che sono segni d' animo non mortificato, vi confesserete cōtinuamente a Dio, supplicandolo che vi fauorisca con la gratia sua, acciò che fatta intieramente la mortificatiōe del vostro huomo uechchio, cessino in voi quelli difetti. G. Cotesti difetti non gli hò io a confessare al Sacerdote? V. Nō per obligatione: perche non sono peccati: che appartengano alla confessione: anzi questi pro-*

## ALFABETO

Autto-  
rità di  
Sacer-  
doti.

priamente sono quelli, delli quali poco auāti vi dis-  
si che David priega essere annettato, chiamādogli  
diffetti secreti. Fatta la vostra cōfessione di q̄sta  
maniera, et pigliata la vostra assolutione dal Sa-  
cerdote, voglio Signora, che rinfrescando nella vo-  
stra memoria l' auttorità, che Christo diede alli Sa-  
cerdoti, dicēdo loro, tutto quello, che ligherete sopra  
la terra, sarà legato nel cielo, et tutto quello, che  
scioglierete sopra la terra, sarà sciolto nel cielo, cre-  
diate fermamente, che Iddio u' hà perdonato tutti i  
peccati vostri, et u' hà ridotto nella sua gratia. Ma  
mirate, che non voglio, che pensiate, che p cotesto,  
ue gli hà pdonato, perche ve gli hauete confessati,  
perche questo sarebbe attribuire a voi ciò, che non è  
vostro. Per ciò voglio, che pensiate, che Iddio ve  
gli hà pdonati, perche credete in X̄po, amate X̄po,  
et hauete collocato la sperāza vostra in Christo, et  
che voi gli hauete confessati, pche Iddio vuole, che  
gli confessiate. G. Io intendo ben questo, ma vor-  
rei saper da voi, che opiniōe è la vostra intorno al-  
lo eleggere del confessare.<sup>1</sup> V. Perche tēgo p certo,  
che buona parte del frutto della cōfessione cōsiste  
nel buono cōfessore, al quale appartiene nō sola-  
mente fare la assolutione, ma con grauità et seueri-  
tà riprendere i peccati, et animare q̄llo che si cōfessa  
alle virtudi Christiane, et dargli rimediij conue-  
nienti, secōdo la qualità della psona p vincere gli  
affetti: et gli appetiti, che lo inclinano a peccare,

Quale  
hà da es-  
sere il  
cōfes-  
sore.

<sup>1</sup> confessore (?).

voglio Signora, che spendiate tutta la vostra prudenza: et tutta la vostra auctorità in eleggere vno confessore, che sia molto al proposito, se lo potrete trouare tale, che p dottrina sappia: et intenda il viuere xp̃iano: et habbia acquistato: et verificato con la isperienza ciò, c' hà letto nelli libri, douete anteporlo a tutti gli altri: et pigliarlo. Con q̃sto tale cōmunicherete i vostri diffetti, pche come bene isperimentato, vi saprà dare tali consigli, cō li quali andando mortificando gli affetti, andiate lasciando i diffetti. Et pche vna tal psona si ritroua poche volte, quādo habbate da far elettioe trà vno letterato senza sperienza di q̃sto viuere xp̃iano: et vno sperimentato senza lettere, voglio che pigliate piu tosto uno sperimentato: pche così come vi saprà dar meglio cōto del camino di què in Hierusalem vna psona: che p hauerlo caminato sia pratica in quello: che vn' altra: che lo sappia per cosmographia: se ben la sapesse più che Tolomeo, così vi saprà meglio introdurre, et portare p lo camino xp̃iano vno: che u' è andato: et vè: che vn' altro: che l' hà letto: et legge. Il quale pche: come dice San Paulo: non aggiūge alle cose: che sono dello Spirito di Dio: non puote in modo ueruno portare vn' altro p doue egli nō è andato giamai. Et pche conosco: che p voi vi stà meglio: voglio: che eleggiate piu tosto vn cōfessore senza lettere: ma con sperienza delle cose spirituali: se tale lo potrete conoscere: che vno con sole lettere: et

## ALFABETO

La cõ-  
muniõe.

*in questo tanto fidateui di me, pche non è maggiore cieco: che quello il quale si persuade: che vede. Et auuertite Signora: che così come voglio, che al confessore isperimentato nel camino xpiano: dimandiate il parer suo, e'l consiglio in tutte le cose vostre: et in tutte quelle gli diate molto credito, così anchora mi pare: che dallo nō isperimentato nō pigliate più: che l'assolutione. Questo dico: perche sò per isperienza: che quelli tali molte volte volendo fare del savio, vi dicono cose: che nō appartengono ad officio di uero christiano, con le quali ui fanno: che contra la volontà vostra gli teniate da poco: et questo non è per niente al proposito in quello tanto alto sacramento. Penso che restiate sodisfatta in questo. G. Si resto, seguite piu auanti. V. Della sacra communione, donde noi christiani partecipiamo del pretiosissimo corpo: et sangue di Iesu Xpo nostro Signore: non vorrei dirui poco: perche anche con dirui molto, non credo sarà possibile: ch'io resti sodisfatto. Ma considerando: che manca gia poco di quì alla notte: et che gran parte di ciò: c' hò detto nella confessione, serue per la communione: passerò brieuemente in questo. Et così dico Signora: che alla cõmunione u' hà da portare l'ardente desio d' unirui con Christo con fede, con speranza: et con charità: le quali tre virtudi: voglio che auuiuiate nell' anima vostra, quādo u' andate a comunicare: et voglio che andiate fondata in humili-*

*tà, la quale, come molte volte u' hò detto, acquisterete per la cognitione di voi medesima, voglio che andiate piena di fede, di tale maniera: che crediate fermamente: che sotto quelle spetie stà il vero corpo et sangue di nostro Signore Iesù Christo. Il quale hauete a pensare, che ci lasciò quì nel mondo, acciò che sempre che quelle spetie si rappresentassero agli occhi nostri corporali, rinfrescassero ne' cuori nostri la memoria della sua passione, nella quale mediante lo suo pretiosissimo sangue stabili vn nuouo patto tra Dio et gli huomini, derogando et annullando il vecchio. Et il nuouo patto è, che noi huomini crediamo essere giustificati p lo sangue di Iesù Xpo: et che Xpo pdonandoci i peccati nostri, ci giustifichi. Voglio più: che andiate piena di cōfidenza nella promessa di Xpo, molto sicura: che quella celestiale uiuanda u' hà da donare molta posanza et forza per caminare animosamente per lo camino christiano: et u' hà da assecurare: et difendere da gli combattimenti, et assalti de gli affetti vostri: et de gli appetiti sensuali: et così aiutare alla mortificatione dell' huomo uecchio, et alla uiuificatione del nuouo, perche hauete da tenere per certo, che tutti questi affetti, et molto più altri fà nell' animo la santissima cōmunionem del pretiosissimo corpo et sangue di Iesù Xpo nostro Signore. Et p ciò tengo io per cosa laudabile, et gioueuole la frequentatione della cōmunionem. Tuttavia<sup>1</sup>,*

<sup>1</sup> Tuttavia [molto più] (?).

## ALFABETO

nelle persone: che hauendosi posto dinanzi a gli occhi la Idea de la p<sup>er</sup>fettione x<sup>risti</sup>ana: hanno incominciato a caminare verso quella. Et così voglio: che voi Signora incontinenti: che cominciate a caminare p questo camino: incominciate anchora a frequentare la cōmunione: andando sempre a quella cō l'apparecchio: ch'io u' hò detto. La vostra limosina sarà tãta: quãta sarà la vostra charità, ma meglio direi: che in tanto sarà buona la vostra limosina, in quãto procederà da pura charità: et vero amore di Dio. G. Et nō mi darete alcuna regola: ch'io tēga in compartire le mie limosine. V. Non vi darò altra regola: se non quella della charità. Amate voi Dio: et la saprete: come hauete da cōpartire le vostre limosine. G. Dicolo pche il predicatore disse vn dì, che secondo l'ordine della charità: erauamo più obligati alli nostri prossimi: che a noi medesimi. V. Quello che il predicatore disse è: che la charità bene ordinata comincia da Dio: et che quìui la imparano le p<sup>er</sup>sone: come hanno d' amare se: et come hanno d' amare il prossimo. Et disse più: che quello: il quale stà in charità p<sup>er</sup>fetta: molte volte pospone lo interesse suo particolare: p lo bene del prossimo. Il che vegghiamo in molti luoghi in Sã Paulo: il quale dice, che la charità nō cerca gli interessi suoi: et quando al compartire della limosina lo istesso San Paulo senza differenza alcuna dice. Facite bonum ad omnes: et volendo alquanto venire al particolare

La li-  
mosina.

Ordine  
della  
charità.

*lare dice, ma maggiormente alli buoni christiani, tenendosi a quello che dice Xpo, che a quello il quale riceue il Propheta solamente pche è Propheta, da Iddio dono di Prophetia, et che a quello, che riceue il giusto solamente perche è giusto, da Iddio dono di giustitia. Pare a voi che siano doni qsti d'abbandonare? G. Anzi m' hò goduto tãto d' udir qsto, che mi muoio di voglia di conoscere alcuna psona giusta, p farle mille carezze: et mille beni, p essere io anchora giusta. V. Gentile contraddittione è cotesta. Non vedete voi, che in qsto caso ui mouereste p vostro interesse: et non come Xpo vuole, puramente p suo amore. In fine io veggio Signora, che vi contentereste di fare qualunque cosa, che Iddio vi commandasse: et volesse da voi, pur che ui guardaste l' amore vostro p voi medesima, et non mi merauiglio, pche nel mondo non è cosa piu malageuole, che è fare la persona forza a se stessa, quanto piu nelle cose: che appartengono all' animo, doue non bastano forze esteriori, ne industrie humane. Ma in fine, vogliate, o nò vogliate, io vi prometto, c' hauete da donare l' amor vostro a Dio. G. Che dispetto. V. Per dispetto tenete voi Signora, che hauendoui Iddio creata, perche l' amiate: et hauendoui egli per tante vie: et maniere mostrato l' amor suo, ui dimandi, che l' amiate? G. Lasciatemi stare con le vostre repliche, che se io così tosto lo potessi fare, io ui prometto, che nò sa-*

## ALFABETO

*rei tarda, ma bisogna venire per tanti lambichi a questo effetto, che per dirui la verità, io non sò come voi intendete questo, poi che Iddio mi cōmandaua, che io gli donassi tutto 'l mio amore, pche non mi fece egli di sorte che lo potessi fare sempre ch' io voleua, così come gli potrei donare questa gonna?*

*Peccato  
origi-  
nale.  
Adam.*

*V. La impossibilità, o p dir meglio la difficoltà ci viene dal peccato originale. G. Non posso ottenere da me di voler bene a quello Adam, quādo mi ricordo de i mali, et difficultadi, nelle quali per quello suo peccato ci pose. V. Voltate il foglio Signora,*

*Adam.  
Christo.*

*et ogni volta, che pensando in cotesti mali, et difficultadi vorrete male ad Adam, vogliate bene a Christo, che per sua obediēza u' habilitò, che poteste uscire delli mali, et delle difficultadi, nelle quali la disobediēza d' Adamo vi pose. G. Voi dite bene, ma come isperimento il male della disobediēza d' Adā, et non il bene de la obediēza di Xpo, non posso così bene volgermi ad amare Christo, come mi vado a voler male ad Adam. V. Anchora trouerete vn' altra cosa piu bastante, se ben la considerate, che ad Adam potete voler male, facendo la volontà uostra, et a Christo non potete uoler bene sēza cōtradire alla volōtā uostra, et che ad Adam potete voler male amando voi medesima, et a Xpo non potete voler bene, se non lasciate l' amor proprio, co 'l quale amate voi stessa. Di maniera, che se volete non voler male ad Adam, et*



*voler bene a Christo, poneteui ad isperimentare il bene di Christo, come isperimentate il male d' Adā, et poneteui a contraddire alla uolontà uostra, et a lasciare l' amore vostro proprio, et isperimenterete tantosto piu efficacemente il bene della obediencia di Christo, che hora isperimentate il male della disobediencia d' Adam. G. Che pertinacia tenete con questo amore proprio, et con questa volontà. Hor io ui prometto, che non m' amo tanto, quanto voi pensate. V. Io non penso, che u' amiate piu di quanto scoprite, et appalesate per le parole vostre, et pare a me, che se non amaste uoi stessa, nō uorreste male ad Adam. G. Horsù, che non gli uoglio uoler male. M' andate pigliando alle parole, di maniera, che mi fate uscir a dire quello, che non pensai giamai, che uscisse della bocca mia. Et poi che p lo passato hò tratto buon frutto con le ragioni uostre, nō uoglio, che mi resti niente, et così ui uoglio dire una cosa, che piu mi tiene cōfusa, et in cui tro-uo piu malagevolezza. Quādo uoglio deliberarmi d' entrare in questo camìno xpiano, ueggiamo, che uscita mi daretè, et come la mi rassemblerete nell' animo. Il predicatore dice, che solamente accetta Id-*

*Come si  
serue a  
Dio p  
amore.*

*dio quelle buone opere, che noi puramente facciamo mossi dallo amore di Dio, senza che a quella<sup>1</sup> ci muoua ne timore d' inferno, ne desio, o amore di gloria, et questo credo io certo, che sia così, poi che egli il dice. Hora per dire la uerità, et par-*

<sup>1</sup> quello (?).

## ALFABETO

*Inferno  
et Para-  
diso.*

*lare con voi liberamente, volendo io esaminar bene l'animo mio, ritruouo che nō mi mouerei ad operare cosa nessuna, se nō fusse per timore di quello inferno, et alle volte per amore della gloria, ma nessuna per puro amore di Dio, pche io sò di me, che se non vi fusse Inferno, ne Paradiso, mi passerei bene in questo mondo, viuendo in questa vita morale, et lodabile ne gli occhi del mōdo, come sō uiuuta fin quì senza curarmi di cercare piu auanti. Hora essendo questo così, come io in verità lo conosco in me, et essēdo verità ciò, che 'l predicator dice, io trouo p lo conto mio, che tutto q̃llo ch' io farò di q̃sta maniera, sarà pduto, poi che in effetto conosco, che nō mi muouo a ciò p amor di Dio, ma p amor di me. Io nō sò come mi saperete rassettare questo. V. Così potess' io scacciare dell' animo uostro tutto l' amore vostro proprio, come saprò rassettare cotesto.*

*Compa-  
ratione.*

*G. Alla pruoua. V. Voi hauete Signora vno schiauo comperato per li denari vostri, et benche è vitioso, ribaldo, et male inclinato, gli volete bene, et perche ei non ponga in effetto le sue ribalderie, et vitij, gli minacciate continuamente con la galea, et con altri forti castighi. Se questo tale schiauo hà ingegno, per non andare in galea, et per non essere castigato, et anche intendendo, che voi gli fate q̃lle minaccie p bene suo, non solamente trauaglia di raffrenare i vitij suoi, et di vincere le sue male inclinationi, ma incomincia a volerui bene. Co-*

*noscendo voi questo, cominciate a trattarlo bene. Egli sentendo, et gustando il buono trattamento, et la affettione, che gli portate, comincia anche a seruirui con diligenza, acciò che gli facciate honore, et gli diate bene ciò, che gli bisogna. Lo fate così, et quanto piu voi in questo gli mostrate l'amore, che gli portate, tanto piu cresce in lui l'amore, et volontà, che tiene di seruirui. In modo, che gia non si astiene dalli vitij, et ribalderie per timore della galea, ne è diligente al seruitio vostro, per lo buono trattamento, che gli fate, ma per la buona volontà, et affettione, che conosce, che gli tenete, et se ben non vi fusse galea, et se ben non lo poteste trattar bene, nō lascerebbe di seruirui, perche si truoua obligato per lo passato, et perche conosce in voi, che meritate essere seruita, et obedita. Allhora voi veggendo la bontà dello schiauo, dandogli carta di libertà, lo fate libero, et già egli u' obedisce per amore, et non per timore, et vi serue come libero, et non come schiauo, et per gratia, et non per interesse. Di questo medesimo modo si porta Iddio con noi, perche conosce la mala inclinatione, la malignità, et la iniquità, di cui siamo heredi per lo peccato de' nostri primi parenti, volendoci bene p hauerci creati, et redenti col pretiosissimo sangue del suo figliuolo Iesù Christo nostro Signore, et acciò che non mettiamo in essecutione i nostri dishordinati appetiti, cì*

Iiii

## ALFABETO

*pone dinanzi lo 'nferno. Et di què nascono le continue minaccie, delle quali stà piena la sacra scrittura. Quelli di noi, che aprimo gli occhi, et crediamo, che u' è inferno, et sappiamo certo, che Iddio farà ciò che dice, in castigare i nostri uitij, con le pene dello 'nferno, trauagliamo di scostarci dalli uitij, per non incorrere nella pena, et medesimamente perche in alcuno modo conosciamo, che Iddio ci ama. Et in tale caso, quantunque non ci mouiamo per puro amore, tuttavia Iddio ueduta la nostra obediencia, ci apre piu gli occhi, acciò che conosciamo il bene del Paradiso. Conosciamolo, et desiderandolo cominciamo ad applicarci a fare la uolontà di Dio, accio che ci doni la sua gloria. All' hora accettando Iddio la nostra buona uolotà, ci apre piu gli occhi, acciò che conosciamo da una parte la nostra malitia, et dall' altra la sua infinita bontà. Con questa cognitione incominciamo ad innamorarci di Dio, et ad obedirlo, et seruirlo, non già per paura dello 'nferno, ne per amore della gloria, ma solamente perche habbiamo conosciuto, che egli è degno d' essere amato, et che infinitamente ci ama. All' hora Iddio ci da carta di libertà, et noi non usciamo dal suo seruitio per hauer hauuto la libertà, anzi gli siamo molto piu soggetti, et piu obediienti, ma non come schiaui, se non come liberi, non come mercenarij, se non come figliuoli, et in questo consiste la libertà christiana. Hauui sodis-*

fatto questo? *G. Si, molto, molto, et solamente mi resta vno dubbio, che è la cagione, che quantunque molte persone seruono con timore, come schiaui, et per interesse, come mercenarij, mai non uengono a seruire, come figliuoli con la libertà, che uoi dite. Libertà xp̄iana.*

*V. E che quando seruono, come schiaui, et quādo seruono come mercenarij, si tengono, et giudicanoò essere perfetti, et non cercando altra perfettione, restansi sempre in quella seruitù, come dice San Paulo, che non tenendo notitia della giustitia, con la quale Iddio giustifica quelli, che in lui credono, et volendo giustificarsi per l' opre loro, non giungono mai a parte della giustitia di Dio. Per tātò bisogna Signora, che riduciate alla vostra memoria quello, che io u' hò detto, che conuiene tenere sempre innanzi la Idea della pfettione xp̄iana, della maniera che io la ui hò dipinta: et meglio, se meglio potete, così p̄ pensare: che non hauete a cessare in questo camino xp̄iano, fin che vi trouiate molto appresso di quella, come perche sempre: che paragonerete la vostra perfettione con quella ui teniate p̄ imperfetta: et non presumiate di voi: anzi teniate sempre cagione legitima p̄ humiliarui, poi che così come gli angioli mali p̄derono la gloria p̄ supbia, così vuole Iddio, che noi la guadagniamo p̄ humilità. G. Pure resto io sodisfatta di q̄sto, et con due parole, che mi diciate della libertà xp̄iana, La libertà xp̄iana, vi lascerò andar con Dio. V. Sappiate Signora, che*

## ALFABETO

*la libertà christiana è vna cosa, che per molto, che si ragioni, et p bene, che si prattichi, non si puote giamai intendere, se non per isperienza, di maniera, che tanto saprete di lei, quanto isperimenterete nell'anima uostra, et niente piu. Per tanto Signora se la volete imparare, metteteui ad isperimentarla, et non haurete necessità, che io la vi dica. Ma tuttauia vi voglio dir questo, che secondo pare p quello che „ dice San Paulo, essendo io libero di tutte le cose, „ mi feci seruo di tutti, per guadagnarli tutti p Christo. La libertà del Christiano è nella cōscienza, però che il vero, et pfetto christiano è libero dalla tirannia de la legge, dal peccato, et dalla morte, et è Signore assoluto de gli affetti suoi, et de gli appetiti. Et dall' altra parte è seruo di tutti, quanto a l' huomo esteriore, percioche è soggetto a seruire a le necessitadi del corpo suo, et a tenere soggetta la carne sua, et a seruire alli prossimi suoi, secondo la sua possibilità, o con le facultà sue, se ne tiene, o con buona dottrina, se u' aggiunge, et con esempio di buona, et santa vita. Di maniera: che vna istessa psona christiana quanto allo spirito è libera, senza riconoscere altro superiore, che Iddio, et quanto al corpo è soggetta a tutte quante le persone, che sono nel mondo per Christo. Già Signora hauete inteso donde nasce la confusione d' animo, nella quale fin quì siate viuuta, et insiemenente il rimedio, che potete pigliare p quella. Hauete inteso donde vi vie-*

*ne la contraddittione, che dapoi, che vdite il Predicatore sentite dentro di voi, et la maniera, come vi potrete liberare da q̃lla. V' hò dipinto la Idea della perfettione christiana. V' hò mostrato dodici passi, p li quali incomincierete a caminare a Christo senza esser veduta dal mondo. Houui sodisfatto ad alcuni dubbij, che vi sono occorsi. Vltimamēte ha uete inteso, in che consiste la libertà christiana. Resta hora, che voi incominciate subito, subito da questa notte a far pruoua di voi in quelli passi, che io u' hò insegnato. Percioche voglio, che di mattina mi diciate quello, che di loro vi pare, et mirate, che sempre preghiate Iddio, che vi guidi, et inuij cōn la gratia sua, senza consentire giamai, che vi scostiate da lui. Però che questo è il camino per arriuare alla perfettione christiana, et per godere la libertà christiana, allaquale quando sarete giunta, potrete cō verità dire col Propheta David. Dominus regit me, et nihil mihi deerit. In loco pascue<sup>1</sup> „ ibi me collocauit. cio è. Il Signore è la mia guida, „ non mi mancherà cosa alcuna. Ei m' hà posto in „ buona pastura. „*

<sup>1</sup> pascuæ (?).

*Brieue sōma di quello, che cōtiene tutto l'Dialogo.*

- Come s' hā da intendere, che l' huomo è creato  
alla imagine di Dio. fo. 6*
- In che consiste la felicità dell' huomo. fo. 7*
- Che cose si considerano nel peccato originale. fo. 9*
- Che è quello, che noi xpiani guadagnamo nel bat-  
tesimo. fo. 9*
- Duo effetti, che fà la predicatione del Vangelo ne  
gli animi de' christiani. fo. 10*
- Che cosa è legge. fo. 11*
- Che cosa è il frutto del Vangelo. fo. 12*
- Donde nasce la difficoltà, che le persone ritrouano  
nel camino di Dio. fo. 14*
- Cinque modi, o conditioni di persone. fo. 14*
- In che consiste la perfettione christiana. fo. 17*
- Natura dell' amor proprio. fo. 18. 21. 33. 35. 51*
- La natura dell' amor di Dio. fo. 18*
- Vna breue dichiaratiōe de dieci cōmādamēti. fo. 19*
- Vno auiso christiano, et necessario sopra l' osserua-  
tione de' commandamenti. fo. 23*
- Vna regola Christiana, et euangelica, che cōprende  
tutti i commandamenti. fo. 23*
- Vna dottrina di San Giouanni, che consola, quelli,  
che anchora non sono giunti alla pfettiōe. fo. 23*
- Tre modi, nelli quali le psone peccano per malitia,  
per ignoranza, et per fragilità. fo. 23*
- I frutti della charità secondo San Paulo. fo. 26*



<i>Che cosa è fede.</i>	<i>fo. 26</i>
<i>La differenza, che è trà la fede, et la speranza con vna comparatione.</i>	<i>fo. 28</i>
<i>Divisione de l' huomo secondo San Paulo.</i>	<i>fo. 30</i>
<i>Dodici passi p caminar alla pfettiõe xp̃iana.</i>	<i>fo. 31</i>
<i>Come habbiamo a conoscere il mondo.</i>	<i>fo. 33</i>
<i>Come habbiamo a conoscere noi medesimi.</i>	<i>fo. 34</i>
<i>Che la persona s' hà d' abhorrire se stessa.</i>	<i>fo. 35</i>
<i>Che per amare Iddio è dibisogno conoscere Iddio et che per tre uie lo conosciamo.</i>	<i>fo. 35</i>
<i>Vna per lume naturale.</i>	<i>fo. 36</i>
<i>L' altra per lo testamento vecchio.</i>	<i>fo. 36</i>
<i>L' altra per Christo.</i>	<i>fo. 36</i>
<i>Come habbiamo a conoscere Christo.</i>	<i>fo. 37</i>
<i>Vna brieue, et pia dichiarazione del Credo.</i>	<i>fo. 39</i>
<i>Come habbiamo ad amar Iddio, e 'l prossimo.</i>	<i>fo. 42</i>
<i>Come ci habbiamo a confidare nella fede.</i>	<i>fo. 43</i>
<i>Come ci habbiào da certificare nella sperūza.</i>	<i>fo. 44</i>
<i>Che l' essercitio del christiano hà d' essere la morti- ficatione dell' huomo vecckio, et la viuificatione del nuouo.</i>	<i>fo. 46</i>
<i>In che modo habbiamo a negare le voluntadi no- stre.</i>	<i>fo. 46</i>
<i>In che maniera habbiamo a mortificare i nostri cinque sentimenti corporali.</i>	<i>fo. 48</i>
<i>Che siano da mortificare gli affetti interiori.</i>	<i>fo. 48</i>
<i>Che ci esaminiamo ogni notte di quello, che haure- mo fatto il dñ.</i>	<i>fo. 51</i>

- Che cōmunichiamo le cose nostre con alcuna persona spirituale.* fo. 52
- Vna consideratione cōtra l' honor del mōdo.* fo. 53
- Vn' altra consideratione contra la sodisfattione delle cose esteriori.* fo. 53
- Cōsolatiō cōtra le tentatiōi et tribulatiōi.* fo. 54
- Che si guardi dī praticar cō le psōe del mōdo.* fo. 55
- Che prima s' hà d' adornare l' huomo interiore, che lo esteriore per vna comparatione.* fo. 56
- Il frutto, c' habbiamo da trahere de la Messa.* fo. 57
- Come, et con quale animo habbiamo ad vdire la predicatione.* fo. 58
- Come habbiamo d' andare a leggere la sacra scrittura.* fo. 58
- Che libri hà da leggere vno principiante.* fo. 58
- Il modo dello orare.* fo. 58
- Come hà da digiunare vna psona xpiana.* fo. 59
- Della confessione.* fo. 60
- Quale habbia ad essere il confessore.* fo. 62
- Come ci habbiamo ad apparecchiare per la communion, et chi la può frequentare.* fo. 63
- Quale hà da essere la nostra limosina.* fo. 64
- Che ordine tiene la charità christiana.* fo. 64
- Che incominciando a seruire a Dio p timore, et per interesse, si viene a seruire per amore, Questo si dichiara con vna comparatione.* fo. 66
- In che consiste la libertà christiana.* fo. 68

DEL MEDESMO  
A V T O R E.

IN CHE MANIERA IL CHRISTIANO  
hà da studiare nel suo proprio libro,  
et che frutto hà da trahere dello studio,  
et come la santa scrittura  
gli serue per interprete,  
o commentario.

*Proposta.*

*H* auendouì molte volte vdito dire, che lo  
proprio studio del christiano debbe essere  
nel suo proprio libro, tenēdolo sempre  
aperto, et leggendo sempre in quello, hò desiderato  
sapere, qual è il mio libro, et come hò da studiare  
in lui, et che utilità traherò della lettione, applicandomi  
allo studio christiano. Et poi che voi cò le vostre parole  
hauete in me suegliato questo desio, giusta cosa sarà,  
che medesimamente in ciò mi sodisfacciate.

*Risposta.*

entre che l' huomo studia nelli libri altrui,  
*M* conosce gli animi di quelli, che còposero  
quelli libri, ma non conosce se stesso.  
*H*ora perche appartiene al christiano, conoscere

## ALFABETO

*se medesimo, conoscer l'essere, che tiene, come figlio di Dio, per la regeneratione christiana, soglio io dire, che lo proprio studio del christiano debbe essere nel suo proprio libro. Perche leggendo in quello, conosce se medesimo, et quanto piu, et meglio si conosce, tanto piu ageuolmente si dissamora di se, et del mondo, et s'inamora di Dio, et di Christo. Et questo debbe esser la 'ntentione vostra in questa lettione del vostro libro. Et p tanto hauete d'auertire, che leggendo nel vostro libro, non hauete da pensare, che Iddio vi considera tale, quale voi u' immaginate di voi medesimo. Ma hauete da stare certo, che egli vi considera in quanto state incorporato in Christo, considerando in voi ciò che considera in Christo. Inteso questo, che importa molto, sappiate, che io costume di chiamare l'animo mio, il libro mio, peroche in quello si cōtengono le mie opinioni, così le false, come le vere: et in quello si ritruoua la mia confidenza, et la mia diffidenza, la mia fede, et la mia incredulità, et la mia speranza, et la mia trascuragine, la mia charità, et la mia inimicitia. In quello anchora trouerò la mia humilità, et la mia presuntione, la mia mansuetudine, et la mia pazienza<sup>1</sup>, la mia modestia, et la mia superbia, la mia semplicità, et la mia curiosità, la mia resolutione col mondo, e'l mio rispetto al mondo, la resolutione con me medesimo, e'l mio amore proprio. Et in conclusione in quello*

*L'animo  
il libro.*

<sup>1</sup> impazienza (?).

si truoua quāto tengo di buono p lo fauore di Dio, et di Christo, et quanto hò acquistato di male per la prauità mia naturale. Questo è il mio libro, et questo è ciò ch' io leggo in quello ogn' hora, et ogni tempo: et non è occupatione ueruna: che m' impedisca<sup>1</sup> questa lettione. Alle uolte mi pongo ad esaminare le opinioni: che tengo nel negocio xpiano: et in cui le fondo: come le intendo: et come le sento. Altre volte mi pōgo ad esaminare: che quantità tengo di confidenza nelle promesse di Dio: come dependo totalmente in tutte le cose da Dio: con che uolontà pōgo in essecutiōe ciò ch' io conosco essere la uolontà di Dio. Altre volte mi pongo a cōsiderare quanto mi ritruouo fermo et costāte nella fede di Christo tenendomi p perdonato da Dio, et p riconciliato con Dio in Xpo, et p Christo. Considero se la fede xpiana hà effetto in me, facendomi mutare del mio naturale, et se 'l viuere xpiano m'hà fatto mutare di conditione, et di costumi, perche questa è la rigeneratione, et la rinouatione xpiana. *Rigeneratione.* Altre uolte uò pēsando, se uiue sempre in me il desio della venuta di Christo al giudicio, come uiue in quelli, che desiderandola l' aspettano. Ouero imagino quanto si ritruoua uiuo in me questo desio, et questo pensamento. Altre uolte entro in vno molto stretto conto con me stesso, esaminando, quanto io amo Iddio, et Christo, se lo amo piu, che me, et quanto amo i prossimi miei, et se gli amo

<sup>1</sup> impedisca (?).

## ALFABETO

*tanto, quanto me. Et indi uò esaminando tutte le cose mie, et la 'ntentione, con la quale mi mouo a farle, et mi sforzo per non lasciarmi ingannare in alcuna di loro. Se veggio, che puramente vāno indirizzate alla gloria di Dio, et di Christo, et all'utile spirituale, et eterno delli prossimi miei, conosco, che vado innanzi con la charità. Ma se veggo, che uà congiunta la mia propria gloria, e'l mio proprio interesse, conosco, ch' io mi stò senza veruna charità, et incontinenti ricorro a Christo, et pōgo nel mio pensamento, che Iddio considera in me quello, che in Christo. Altre uolte dando una vista per tutte le cose mie, vò esaminando, che quantità tengo d' humilità, et che quantità di presuntioe, che quantità di māsuetudine, et che quantità d' impatienza, che quantità d' humilità, et che quantità d' arroganza, et di superbia, che quantità di semplicità, et che quantità di curiosità, che quātità di resolutione col mondo, et che quantità di rispetto al mondo, che quātità di resolutione con me medesimo, et che quantità d' amore proprio, et sensuale. Et se per fare questa essamina non mi bastano le cose, che mi s' offeriscono praticando, et conuersando trà gli huomini, uò pensando, quando mi s' offerisce la tale, o la tale cosa, che accadè a tale, et a tale psona, come starei certo nella confidenza, fermo nella fede, sollecito nella speranza, feruente nella charità, come sarei humile, mansueto, come starei risoluto col mondo,*

*col mondo, non istimando gli honori suoi, ne gli suoi dishonori, et risoluto con me stesso, non istimādo gli interessi miei ne le mie incōmodità, i miei piaceri esteriori, et le mie auuersità. Di questa maniera studio io nel mio libro, e'l frutto, ch' io traho di questa lettione è, ch' io uēgo molto bene in cognitione di ciò, ch' io sono et vaglio p me, et quanto vaglio per Dio, et per Christo, et così vengo in maggior cognitione del beneficio di Christo, et imparo del tutto a diffidarmi di me, tenēdo di me molto pessima opinione, et a confidarmi totalmente di Dio, et di Christo, tenendo altissimi cōcetti di Dio, et di Christo, et ad accettare di nuouo la giustitia di Christo, nel quale mi conosco giusto, sempre che in me mi conosco ingiusto. Et così mi auiene, che quanto piu continuamente leggo in questo mio libro, tātō piu cresce in me l' essere, che tengo p beneficio di Dio, et di Christo, et manca quello, che tengo come figlio d' Adamo. Donde risulta, che trouando io sempre cose nuoue da leggere in questo mio libro, et veggendo ciò, ch' io auanzo studiando in lui, mi ricreo tanto di leggere in lui, che non m' auanza tēpo di leggere nelli libri de gli altri. Et così gli hō serratti tutti, lasciādo solamēte La sacra aperto il libro della santa scrittura, del quale mi scrittura. seruo, come d' interprete, o commentario, p intendere meglio il mio libro, passando ageuolissimamente p tutte le cose, che non mi seruono a questo ef-*

K

## ALFABETO

- fetto. Quando voglio esaminare le mie opinioni nella cosa xp̄iana, se sono false o vere, le vò paragonando con q̄lle, che si legge, che teneuano i Sāti, li quali scrissero la santa scrittura, considerando la*
- David. confidenza, che David teneua in Dio, et staua tutto rimesso a Dio, conosco la mia confidenza, et la mia diffidēza, et incomincio di nuouo a cōfidare. Leg-*
- La fede. gendo la fede xp̄iana di quelli christiani della primitiua Chiesa, li quali si conosceuano giusti, et santi in Xp̄o, et per Christo conosco la mia fede, et la mia incredulità, et dimando a Dio, che accresca*
- Le para- in me la fede. Leggendo le parabole, che diceua bole. Christo, eshortando noi continuamente, che stessimo,*
- Il giu- sopra l'auiso, aspettando la venuta sua al giudi-*
- dicio. cicio, come in tēpo de gli Apostoli, questo dì era aspettato con grandissimo desiderio, conosco la mia speranza, et la mia trascuragine, et da quì innāzi viuo piu sopra di me. Leggendo gli effetti della*
- Charità. charità che scriue San Paulo alli Corinthij, et q̄lla charità, che era trà primi christiani, conosco la mia charità, et la mia nemistà, et hauendo vergogna di me stesso, supplico a Dio, che mi alieni da me, et*
- Humil- m' unisca a se. Considerando la humilità, et la māsuetudine, che con effetto dimostrò Christo p tutto'l tempo della sua vita, et principalmēte nella sua passione, conosco la mia humilità, et la mia māsuetudine, la mia presontione, et la mia impatiēza, et grandemente pongo affettione alla māsuetudine, et*



*alla humilità, considerando la modestia, et la semplicità, con la quale si viuea trà christiani al principio della publicatione del Vangelo. Et in quanto viueuano in commune, et non teneuano altro pensiero, se nō di sapere Xpo crocifisso, conosco la mia modestia et semplicità, la mia insolentia, et curiosità, et vengo in horrore di tutta la curiosità, abbracciando la semplicità. Leggendo quanto stauano gli Apostoli risoluti col mondo, quādo essendo presi et battuti, perche predicauano Christo, andauano allegri et cōtenti, per vedere che haueuano patito per Christo, et considerando, come mi contenterei io, quando fusse trouato di quella maniera, conosco la mia resolutione col mondo, e'l mio rispetto al mondo, et viemmi desiderio di risolvermi meglio da quì innanzi col mondo. Leggendo quanto risoluto staua San Paulo con se medesimo, quando diceua che sapeua contentarsi con quello, in cui staua, et tenea male et bene, poco et molto, et considerando se io posso dire il medesimo di me, conosco la mia resolutione con me stesso, e'l mio amor proprio, et incomincio a volermi male, per non priuarmi di questa sodisfattione et perfettione. Et finalmente paragonando gli affetti miei, et gli appetiti miei con quelli, ch' io leggo nella santa scrittura, conosco bene quanto viui, et morti stanno, et desidero non dare loro vn giorno di vita. Et di questa maniera la santa scrittura mi serue come*

*Gli  
Apostoli  
col mōdo.*

*Sā Paulo  
con  
se.*

Kii

## ALFABETO

*d' interprete, o commentario per studiare meglio nel mio libro, et meglio intenderlo. Et così intendo se 'l viuere mio christiano, et la mia mortificatione christiana risponde bene, o male, molto o poco alla mia fede christiana, et professione christiana, et guadagno due cose, la vna, che non mi istemo p la*

*Istema' di se.* *opinione, che gli huomini tengono di me mala, et buona, se non per quella che io medesimo tengo di me stesso, riseruandomi sempre la opinione, che Iddio tiene di me, conoscendomi membro di Christo. L' altra, che a poco a poco vò formando l' ani-*

*Imitatione di Xpo.* *mo mio, riducendolo con la imitatione di Xpo, et de' suoi Santi a quello che io conosco in lui, et in loro, ansio, et desideroso di cōprendere, et di conseguire quella perfettione, nella quale incorporato in Christo, et fatto membro di Christo, son compreso aspirando, non per propria gloria, ne per proprio interesse, ma per gloria di Dio, et di Christo, et della gratia del Vāgelo di Christo, che mi conosca Iddio così giusto, pio, et santo in me medesimo, come mi conosce giusto, pio et santo in Christo. Voi m' hauete dimādato, ch' io vi dica, qual è il mio libro, et come sia da studiare in lui, et che frutto hauete da trahere di lui. Io u' hò risposto, che 'l mio*

*L'animo il libro.* *libro è l' animo mio, et che in questo studio, quando essamino che cosa tengo in lui, et la vtilità, ch' io traho di lui, è conoscere me stesso, conoscere Iddio, et Christo, et così diffidarmi di me, et confidar-*

*mi in Dio, et in Christo. Et u' hò detto in che maniera mi seruo della santa scrittura, come in modo di commentario, per poter meglio intendere il mio libro. Resta che pigliando per voi quello, che io hò detto di me, incontinenti u' applichiate a questo utilissimo studio, lasciando da parte tutti gli altri. Et se al principio vi parerà difficile, et insipido, non per questo lo lasciate, perche vi certifico, che Gli in questo studio accade ciò, che suole accadere ne studi. gli altri, che si studiano, che nel principio sono malageuoli, et insipidi, ma li mezi sono facili, et tengono alcuno sapore, et li fini sono dolcissimi, et saporissimi. Certificādouì, che tanto piu u' accaderà in questo studio, che ne gli altri accade, quāto conseguirete piu utilità in questo, se lo sperimenterete. Il<sup>1</sup> quale senza comparatione alcuna è molto maggiore, che tutto quello, che si trahe di tutti gli altri studij. Anzi tutti gli altri senza questo son cagione di morte, pche la prudenza humana si fà forte, et robusta contra lo spirito. Et così gli altri studij fanno l'huomo superbo, et questo solo gitta, at mādā p terra la prudenza humana, et humilia l'huomo, dādogli cognitione di se medesimo<sup>2</sup>, di q̄llo, che è suo, et cognitiōe di Dio, et di Xp̄o, et di q̄llo, che è p fauore di Dio, et incorporato in Xp̄o, et così gli vā facendo ricuperare quella dignità, che pdè il primo huomo, facēdolo simile a Xp̄o, et cōseguentemente somigliante a Dio. Alquale vi raccōman-*

<sup>1</sup> la quale (?).<sup>2</sup> [et] di q̄llo (?).

## ALFABETO

*derete sempre, supplicandolo, che vi mandì il suo Spirito Santo p maestro di questo studio, et dimãdategli il medesimo p me, et p tutti quelli che desiderano, et aspettano la gloria, et honore, et immortalità, et vita eterna con Iesu Xpo nostro Signore. Et vi voglio auuisare di q̄sto, che se leggẽdo nel vostro libro, vi fermerete p ispatio d' un quarto d' hora nella consideratione dell' essere che tenete, come figlio d' Adamo, cõsiderando la vostra diffidenza, incredulità, et trascuragine in aspettare Christo, la nemistà cõ Dio, la uostra ambitiõe, l'ira, l'arroganza, et la curiosità, il vostro rispetto del mondo, et l' amor proprio, che vi fermiate tre hore di tempo, pongo p caso nella cõsideratione dell' essere, che tenete per Xpo, come figliuolo di Dio, considerando in voi quello, che considerate in Xpo, et così considererete la vostra confidenza, fede, speranza, charità vostra, humiltà, mansuetudine, modestia, et semplicità, la vostra resolutione col mondo, et con voi medesimo, attribuendo alla incorporatione in Christo tutto quello, che conoscerete in voi di q̄sti doni di Dio, et di queste virtù christiane. Questo conuiene, che facciate così, perche hauete da sapere, che benche vi paia, che la consideratione dell' essere, che tenete, come figlio d' Adamo vi humilij, et vi sarà più vtile, che considerarui nell' essere, che tenete, come figlio di Dio incorporato in Xpo, pure q̄sto è il contrario. Perche così è, che la consideratione*

*Figlio  
d' Adā.  
Figlio  
di Dio.*

*del vostro proprio essere, con humiliarui, vi fa diffidare, et stare rimesso, et p cōseguente senza pēsiero, ma la consideratione dell' essere, che tenete p la incorporatione in X̄po, cō humiliarui molto piu, vi fa crescere nella confidenza, et stare molto sopra di voi, et così solleccito: et con pensiero. Et p questo vi dico, che passando leggierrmēte per la cōsideratione del vostro proprio essere, vi fermiate molto nella consideratione dell' essere, che tenete per Christo, seruendoui della consideratione del vostro proprio essere per istimare piu l' essere che tenete p Christo, et per conoscere, che tanto è quello, c' hauete lasciato del vostro proprio essere, et che tanto hauete recuperato dell' essere, che tenete p Christo. Poi che la vostra intentione è mutare di tale maniera di costumi, che possiate parere dinanzi al giudicio di Dio con molta costanza et fermezza in virtù dell' essere, che tenete p Christo. Et così l' essere, che tenete di voi non u' è cagione di vergogna, ne confusione. Perche per questo vi è dato, et comunicato lo Spirito Sāto mandato p lo medesimo Iesu Christo nostro Signore.*

### Registro.

A B C D E F G H I K

*Tutti sono quaderni Eccetto K che è Duerno.*



*Alcuni errori commessi nella stampa e ristampa del ALFABETO CHRISTIANO, in Italiano. I segnati con l'asterisco \* sono quei della prima impressione, nell'anno 1546. Anche ci sono in essa altri errori ortografici, qui non segnati per più facili a scorgersi. Nemmeno si notano qui gli errori espressi al pie di pagina della ristampa. E gli errori peculiari a questa edizione, sono quegli non segnati con l'asterisco.*



Algunas erratas en la impresión i reimpresión del ALFABETO CHRISTIANO en italiano. Las señaladas con el asterisco \* son las de la primera impresión, año de 1546. También hai en ella otras erratas ortográficas, no señaladas aquí, porque son fáciles de descubrirse. Tampoco se notan aquí las erratas expresadas al pie de página en la reimpresión. I las erratas peculiares a esta edición, son las que no llevan asterisco.



Some *errata* in the printing and reprinting of the ALFABETO CHRISTIANO in Italian. Those marked with the asterisk \* are of the first impression, in the year 1546. In that edition there are also other orthographical errors not inserted here, being easily discovered. Neither are the *errata* expressed at the foot of the page in this reprint inserted here. The errors peculiar to the present edition are those which have not the asterisk.

Fogli.	Righe.	Errori.	Correzioni.
* 4.	19.	<i>lequali</i> (passim)	<i>le quali</i>
* <i>ultima.</i>		<i>Et questo et piu</i>	<i>Et questo, et piu,</i>
* 4 <sup>to</sup> .	3.	<i>che ciò,</i>	<i>ch' [è] ciò,</i>
	<i>ult.</i>	<i>cōtra ittiōe</i>	<i>cōtradittiōe</i>
* 5.	2.	<i>perdicatore</i>	<i>predicatore</i>
*	9.	<i>dì</i>	<i>dì</i>
5 <sup>to</sup> .	21.	<i>ingeno</i>	<i>ingegno</i>
* 7.	27.	<i>piu</i>	<i>piu,</i>
8 <sup>to</sup> .	9.	<i>tardarete</i>	<i>tarderete</i>
* 9.	22.	<i>è à questo cio</i>	<i>à questo è ciò</i>
10.	<i>ult.</i>	<i>on</i>	<i>onì</i>
10 <sup>to</sup> .	11.	<i>seruire</i>	<i>seruirui</i>
12.	19.	<i>terrible</i>	<i>terribile</i>
*	22.	<i>adimpire</i> [et altrove]	<i>adempire</i>
*	27.	<i>benefate</i>	<i>bene fate</i>
* 12 <sup>to</sup> .	25.	<i>sì</i>	<i>sì</i>
* 14.	26.	<i>pnitiosi</i>	<i>pnitiose</i>
*	<i>ult.</i>	<i>dì</i>	<i>dì</i>
14 <sup>to</sup> .	24.	<i>nondimino</i>	<i>nondimeno</i>
* 15.	2.	<i>conosciuti</i>	<i>conosciute</i>
16.	8.	<i>viuādi</i>	<i>viuāde</i>
* 17.	19.	<i>conficargli</i>	<i>con ficargli</i>
* 18.	18.	<i>parerei</i>	<i>pareri</i>
20.	14.	<i>abbatano</i>	<i>abbattono</i>
* 22 <sup>to</sup> .	24. 25.	Debbe dire così: [ <i>amor del</i> ] <i>prossimo, ci  pose regola nella bocca, et questa sarà la  quinta. Questa è che tegnate [così ben]*  retta, etc. in vece di anchora. L'antico  traduttore italiano, trovò forse nel MS.  spagnuolo scritto <i>tambien</i> [anchora],  in luogo di <i>tan bien</i> [così bene].</i>	
24.	20.	<i>suiceratamente</i>	<i>suisceratamente</i>
* 25.	2.	<i>conosesse</i>	<i>conoscesse</i>
* 30.	3.	<i>possebile</i>	<i>possibile</i>
*	5.	<i>dimandategliele</i>	<i>dimandateglielo</i>
* 30 <sup>to</sup> .	4.	<i>molti di</i>	<i>molti dì</i>
* 31.	13.	<i>esteriore</i>	<i>esteriori</i>
32 <sup>to</sup> .	13.	<i>lascino</i>	<i>lasciano</i>



Fogli.	Righe.	Errori.	Correzioni.
* 33vto.	5.	<i>in constante</i>	<i>inconstante</i>
34vto.	26.	<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>
* 35.	18.	<i>depocagine</i>	<i>dapocagine</i>
35vto.	6.	<i>si</i>	<i>ci</i>
* 36.	13.	<i>visibile</i>	<i>visibili</i>
37.	2.	<i>ripose</i>	<i>rispose</i>
* 39.	5.	<i>salio</i>	<i>sali</i>
* 41.	12.	<i>cominciando</i>	(?) <i>cominciato</i>
* 44vto.	25.	<i>disprezzare</i>	<i>di sprezzare</i>
45.	20.	<i>più aggraderà</i>	<i>più u' aggraderà</i>
45vto.	19.	<i>darà à mentre</i>	<i>darà mentre</i>
48vto.	ult.	<i>s' offerire</i>	<i>sofferire</i>
51vto.	ult.	<i>spero</i>	<i>speso</i>
* 52vto.	9.	<i>tāti di</i>	<i>tāti di</i>
*	22.	<i>firmarsi</i>	<i>fermarsi</i>
* 53vto.	13.	<i>disperare</i>	<i>di sperare</i>
* 55.	11.	<i>cò deboli</i>	<i>con i deboli</i>
* 56.	24.	<i>Può correggersi come va nella nota fo. 56. (che pare meglio) o si può correggere anche = l' altro di, nuova.</i>	
58.	10.	<i>vado</i>	<i>vada</i>
* 60vto.	ult.	<i>che la mi</i>	<i>che le mi</i>
* 62.	4.		[in] <i>iniquitatibus</i>
64.	10.	<i>stabili</i>	<i>stabili</i>
* 66.	20.	. <i>Quādo</i>	, <i>quādo</i>
*	21.	, <i>ueggiamo</i>	. <i>Veggiamo</i>
*	25.	<i>quella</i>	<i>quello</i>
67.	ult.	<i>appeteti</i>	<i>appetiti</i>
* 68.	6.	<i>E</i>	<i>E</i>
* 73.	13.	<i>ad accettare</i>	(?) [et vengo] <i>ad accettare</i>
74vto.	6.	<i>istemo</i>	<i>istimo</i>
75.	12. 13.	<i>sa-porissime</i>	<i>sa-porosisimi</i>
8vto.	18.	<i>indovinate</i>	<i>indovinato</i>
* 42	15.	<i>per Christo</i>	<i>per Iddio</i>





# ALFABETO CRISTIANO

DE

JUAN DE VALDÉS.

REIMPRESIÓN FIEL DEL TRASLADO ITALIANO:

AÑÁDENSE AHORA DOS TRADUCIONES MODERNAS,

UNA EN CASTELLANO, OTRA EN INGLÉS.

"VALDESSIO HISPANUS SCRIPTORE SUPREBIAT ORBIS."



LONDRES. AÑO DE MDCCCLXI.

Et principio quidem eo te modo docere incipiam,  
quo solent pueri institui in scholis, hoc est,  
quoddam tibi SPIRITUALE tradam ALPHABETUM.

VITA D. JOANNIS TAVLERI. OPERA OMNIA. PARIS. 1623.

*Et voglio sgannarvi in questo, che io non vi dò  
queste regole, perche stiate legata ad esse, perche  
la 'ntentione mia è, che non vi serviate di loro, se non  
come d' uno ALFABETO CHRISTIANO, per mezzo del  
quale possiate venire alla perfettione christiana.*

ALFABETO CHRISTIANO, fo. 44v<sup>to</sup>.

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CONSIDERANDO, entre mí, con sentimiento, perdido probablemente para siempre, el orijinál castellano, de este áureo Tratado de Valdés; i juzgando, al mismo tiempo, que él sería una adición de gran prézio, a las cuatro obras, que del mismo Autór tengo publicadas; me resolví a trasladarle del italiano, usando *casi las mismas palabras* que el traductór empleó, pues él asegura, no haber alterado las del autógrafo castellano. Mas, como en el antiguo impreso italiano, hai (a mi entendér), unas treinta i siete erratas sustanziales; no las admito en mi versión, pero las he indicado, poniendo letra diferente, o mi corrección dentro de este signo [ ].

Hecha la traducción, pensaba imprimirla, aquí dentro de España, sola, i de por sí, aunque con muchas Notas, i Observaziones. Pero, viendo yo, por una parte, la importancia, i rareza, del antiguo impreso italiano; i reflexionando, por otra, sobre el absoluto desprecio, con que la jeneralidad de los

españoles mira todavía, aun los rudimentos de la reliji3n Cristiana, i la sistemática oposizi3n con que la combaten, los que se tienen por Maestros, o Ministros de ella; alteré mi primér propósito. Preguntando, pues, a mi amigo Benjamin B. Wiffen, si querría encargarse, de que, a mi sola costa, i no para venta jeneral, como lo demás que he impreso, se reimprimiese en Londres, la versi3n antigua italiana del ALFABETO, junto con mi traslado castellano; él me respondió que sí; i, de paso, me notizi3, que él también había hecho, para su uso, una traducci3n al inglés, que podría acompañar a la mía.

Acojí, desde luego, con gusto, este inesperado regalo. Porque me es grato, (en la imposibilidad de reproducir el autógrafo castellano del ALFABETO, tal cual Valdés le trazó), asegurár, a lo menos, i con crézes, su conservazi3n, en el traslado, que dél hizo Marco Antonio Magno; acompañándole con las muestras de amistád ázia Valdés, que podíamos dar, los que, trascurridos trescientos años, gustamos aun de sus escritos.

No debo dejár de advertir, que los números marginales, *f. 2.*, *f. 3.*, etc., en la version castellana, corresponden con la foliatura de la italiana, i pueden servir para facilitar su cotejo. I que donde en la traducci3n española hai asterisco \*, denota que la voz allí puesta, conserva escrupulosamente el modismo italiano.

I, sin mas preámbulo, permítaseme hazer notár ahora lo siguiente, refiriéndome al traslado italiano.

Fol. 17. v<sup>to</sup>., en qué dize consistír la perfección cristiana; cómo recalca la idea al fol. 18., i lo que añade al 29.

Al fol. 37., la reprobación del conozimiento de Cristo por costumbre.

Fol. 39—41., la manera ingeniosa i verdadera, con que muestra, ser, los efectos, que obra el Espíritu Santo en nosotros; pruebas, i seguridades, de la verdad del Evangelio.

Fol. 43. r. 12., la voz *credulità*, por *credenza*, no se usa ya en italiano.

Fol. 44. v<sup>to</sup>., No se dán reglas, en este ALFABETO que aten, o encadenen. I la idea se corrobora en el fol. 45. con mayor fuerza.

En el fol. 47. v<sup>to</sup>., r. 8. leo yo, traduziendo, *Et se* [quel' che] *ui s' offerisce*, &c.

En el fol. 57., al hablár de la misa, las referenzias, aluden al Misál Romano. Así p. e. cuando zita el texto de la Ep. a los Filip. *Hoc sentite*, &c., debe acudirse, en el Misál, al 14 de Septiembre, misa de la *Exaltación de la Cruz*, si se quiere verificár bien la zita, i sus motivos.

En la p. 142. r. 5. del *español*, donde en lugar de —divinidad— pongo —*dignidad*—, lo hago, porque, despues de bien pensado, no tengo duda que la voz

*divinità*, fol. 57. v<sup>to</sup>. r. 2. del italiano, es una clara errata por *dignità*. Valdés escribió seguramente *dignidád*.

En el fol. 62. v<sup>to</sup>., se confunde, a mi parecer, la autoridad dada a los Apóstoles, por Jesu Cristo; con la que se arrogan los que hoi se llaman sazerdotes, dándosela ellos a sí mismos.

En el fol. 64. v<sup>to</sup>., i en otros, habla del Predicadór, como si Valdés, le hubiera dictado lo que predicó. Puede, así, aludirse a Pedro Martir Vermiglio, o a Bernardino Occhino, que predicaron, por entonzes, en Nápoles, con gran azeptación, i que fueron, hasta zierto punto, diszípulos de Valdés.

En el fol. 73., sujiere, el zerrár los libros ajenos, para ocuparse únicamente en leér el proprio libro. Si esta determinazió se toma, teniendo presente lo que ya dejo notado, sobre el fol. 44 v<sup>to</sup>.; no puede entenderse absolutamente, o como suena: pues, a muchos, *para mejór leér, i entendér el proprio libro*, pienso yo, que les aprovechará, no poco, i aun les será indispensable lección, la de los libros ajenos, si llevan siempre en la memoria: que todo hombre, en sus lecturas, lo mismo que en todas sus acciones, *tiene la obligazió*, de consultár a su conzienzia, que, dentro de cada uno, es la voz de Dios, que debemos escuchár, i seguir, con preferenzia, a todos los libros, guías, i maestros humanos. Este es el



principio fundaméntal de toda virtuosa libertad, i de toda morál, i relijión.

Lo que acabo de observár, me parece también relazionado, i aplicable, a la idea que mas descuella por todo el ALFABETO, quiero dezír, a cuanto en él se discurre, sobre el nezesario abandono, o renunzia del *amor propio*, del *amór de nosotros mismos*. Si el repetido combate, que en este ALFABETO se haze al amór propio; se arregla i entiende, al tenór de lo que se lee en el fol. 7.; me parece, que nada puede oponerse, a la doctrina de Valdés. Nos dize allí, que procuremos apazentár, o nutrir, esto es, dar vida i fuerzas, a nuestras almas, con cosas, no corporales, sinó espirituales: que procuremos anteponér las cosas zelestiales, a las mundanas. Según esto, renunziár al amór propio, equivale a sujetár, o sacrificár los mas bajos e inferiores prinzipios de nuestra naturaleza, a los mas elevados, i sublimes: porque así venimos a reconozér prácticamente, la supremazía, i dignidad, de nuestras facultades racionales, i morales; i venimos a considerár nuestro mismo cuerpo, i nuestro entero sér, de una manera reverenziál; i a conozér mas a fondo, los dones internos, i externos con que Dios nos ha dotado. Entiendo, pues, que Valdés quería, que Julia Gonzaga, desechase, no el cuidado, i el amór recto, de su ser, i naturaleza; sinó

el extravío de su amor propio:— i que cuando su mente, su cuerpo, o su condición, la sujiriesen pensamientos de plazér, de vanidad, o de orgullo; cuando sintiese debilitarse en ella, por cualquier motivo, el amor del prójimo, venzida por el amor de sí misma; entonces combatiese al amor propio, i le desechase; i reconoziese su mancomunidad de orijen, i obligaciones, con la naturaleza humana; i recordase, la dependenzia de toda criatura, al Criadór; i por consiguiente, la dependenzia e inferioridad del amor propio, al amor de Dios. Si no entendemos así, la guerra declarada, por todo este libro, al amor propio; es menestér suponér, que Valdés pretendía una imposibilidad, porque no es posible, que, dejemos de amarnos a nosotros mismos. Pero ya él responde a esa objeção, cuando se la presenta Julia. I, a la verdad, que el *verdadero amor* de nosotros mismos; i el recordarnos cada hora de nuestro entero sér, es, en nosotros, un debér, al mismo tiempo que una cotidiana nezesidad, i espezialmente nezesaria, paraque conformemos todas nuestras acciones a la voluntád de Dios.

LUIS DE USÓZ I RIO.

MADRID, 1. 3º m. 1861.

**A L F A B E T O**  
**CRISTIANO,**

**QUE ENSEÑA EL VERDADERO  
CAMINO DE ADQUIRIR  
LA LUZ DEL ESPÍRITU  
SANTO.**



*Impreso con grazia i privilejio.*

*El año M. D. XLVI.*

A LA ILUSTRÍSIMA SEÑORA,  
*la Señora Doña Julia Gonzaga, su Señora,*  
*Marco Antonio Magno.*

*Habiendo leído el Diálogo en lengua Castellana, que tiene por título Alfabeto Cristiano, compuesto por una persona que no ha querido nombradía, i hala adquirido de hecho, moviendo al lector a la piedad cristiana, mas que otra cosa que yo jamás leyese: me ha parecido, para mas enzenderme a seguir el verdadero camino de Cristo, que él nos enseña, trasladarlo a nuestra lengua Italiana, cuanto mas claramente he sabido, no cuidando (con tal que sea entendido) de otras observanzias de hablar Toscano, mas solamente, de usár casi las mismas palabras, que usa el Autor. I así, mando a V. S. Ilustrísima, la esfije de sí propria, para que vea, si yo he tán bien sabido hazerla razonár en su lengua, como el compositor de la obra, la supo induzír con razonamientos tan divinos, al amor del Espiritu Santo.*

A LA ILUSTRÍSIMA SEÑORA,

LA SEÑORA

DOÑA JULIA GONZAGA.

Forzado por el mandato de V. S. Ilustrísima, fuera de toda opinión mia, he escrito en Diálogo, todo aquél razonamiento cristiano, en el cual, el otro dia, volviendo del sermón, tanto nos embebimos, que fué nezesario, que la noche le concluyese. I, si bien me acuerdo, no falta cosa ninguna de cuantas allí se razonó, ni hai cosa, que, aquí, no haya sido examinada. Léalo V. S. cuando tuviere tiempo, i si alguna cosa faltáre, i si otra halláre de sobra, i si nuevamente se la ofreziere, qué replicár, en torno a lo que se ha dicho; adviértamelo: porque añadiendo lo uno, i quitando lo otro, al fin, el Diálogo quedará bastante conforme a su voluntad. Pues que mi intenzión ha sido solamente,

la de ayudár, i satisfazer a V. S. I esto podrá servir de respuesta, tanto a las personas, que viendo este Diálogo, le tuvieren por mui estricto i riguroso; como, a las que les pareziere, que sea algun tanto libre i lizenzioso, no considerando, que yo no le razoné con ellos, ni le escribí para ellos, sinó solamente con V. S., i para V. S., i juntamente, para todas aquellas personas, que en su nombre, i como de cosa suya, se quisieren valer, i servir de él. De V. S. quiero solamente dos cosas, en remuneración del trabajo que he tomado estos días en escribir esto. La una es, que no dé mas fé, ni mas crédito, a esto que aquí leyere, de cuanto le pareziere i juzgare, que está fundado en la sagrada Escritura, i va dirijido, i enderezado, a la perfecta caridad cristiana, que es la señal por la cual Cristo quiere, que sus cristianos, entre todas las personas del mundo, sean conozidos i diferenciados. La otra es, que se sirva de este Diálogo, como se sirven de la Gramática, los niños que aprenden la lengua latina, de manera, que lo tome como un ALFABETO CRISTIANO, en el cual se aprenden los prinzipios de la perfeczióu cristiana, haziendo estima, de

que aprendidos estos, ha de dejár el alfabeto, i aplicár su ánimo a cosas mayores, mas exzelentes, i mas divinas. Esto conviene que haga V. S. como la digo, tanto por utilidád suya, cuanto para seguridad mia. Porque, haziendo así, ni yo caeré en el errór, que caen aquellos, que venden sus escrituras, e imaginaziones, al mismo prezio que venden la sagrada Escritura, con lo que mucho mas dañan, que aprovechan ; ni V. S. caerá en el inconveniente en que caen las personas, que con una santa simplizidád, sin pensár mas adelante, se aplican a leér en las escrituras de los hombres. A las cuales, muchas vezes acontece, que hallando en ellas, la leche de la doctrina de los prinzipiantes, toman tanto gusto con ella, que persuadiéndose de poder con sola ella alcanzár la perfección cristiana, no cuidan de ir a buscár el alimento de los perfectos, el cual solamente se halla en las divinas Escrituras. Porque ellas solas de tal manera se acomodan a la capacidad de quien las lee, que al prinzipiante dan leche, i al aprovechado dan el manjár conforme a su provecho. De donde naze, que tales personas dependientes de las escrituras de los hombres,

i con ellas atadas; siempre se quedan imperfectas, aunque muchas veces se juzguen i tengan por perfectísimas. Por lo cual, deseando yo, que V. S. no se tenga jamás, ni juzgue por perfecta, i que en verdad lo sea a los ojos de Dios, i del mundo, quiero, que no se adhiera a este escrito, ni le tenga en mas aprecio del que debe tenerse el escrito de un hombre, que deseoso de ayudarla en este negozio cristiano, la muestra el camino, por el cual podrá llegar a Cristo, i unirse con Cristo. I quiero, que su intenzión sea, hazér a Cristo pazífico poseedór de su corazón, de tál manera, que Él rija, i gobierne absolutamente, i sin contradicción alguna todas sus cosas. I cuando V. S. habrá hecho esto, créame, que no se sentirá [en] nezesidad de cosa ninguna, de cuantas en esta presente vida la pudieren dar entero, i verdadero reposo i contento. Porque Cristo mismo, la colocará, i pondrá en los pastos amenísimos del conozimiento de su divinidad, en los cuales, quieta i reposadamente dormirá, i reposará. I cuando yo viere i conoziere a V. S. en este glorioso estado, zierto, i seguro de su provecho espiritual, no dudaré en creér, que mi inten-



zión, en este escrito, ha sido toda cristiana, i que el ánimo con el cual V. S. le ha leído, ha sido discreto, humilde i puro. Dios nuestro Señor lo haga, conforme a lo que V. S. Ilustrísima ha menester, i a lo que yo, como su afizionadísimo servidór, continuamente deseo.



JULIA. VALDÉS.

JULIA. Tengo tánta confianza en nuestra amistad, que me parece puedo libremente comunicár con vos, aun aquellas cosas, que apenas se revelan al confesór. Por lo que, queriendo ahora partiziparos algunas, en las cuales me va mas que la vida, os ruego, que si en otra parte no teneis cosa, que mucho os importe, seais contento de oirme atentamente, lo que yo os quiero dezir. I mirád, que si no pensais estár mui atento, por tener el pensamiento a otra parte; que me lo digais libremente, porque esto lo podré yo dejár para otro dia.

VALDÉS. Antes, Señora, yo rezibo favór, en que me mandeis algo en que entienda. I ya sabeis, que no tengo negózios, que me embarazen, mucho mas en aquello que toca a vuestro servizio.

JULIA. Ahora bien, dejando a un lado vanas retóricas, i zeremónias inútiles, que están de mas entre nosotros; quiero que

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sepais, que ordinariamente vivo tan descontenta de mí propia, i de todas las cosas del mundo, i tan disgustada, que si viéseis mi corazón, estoi segura de que me tendriais lástima, porque en él no hallariais mas que confusión, perplejidad, e inquietúd. I esto, ya mas, ya menos, segun las cosas que se me ofrezan. Mas nunca siento tanta calma en mi ánimo, que queriendo hazer cuenta con él, pueda acabár de entendér, qué es lo que yo querria, qué cosa le satisfaría, o con cual se contentaría. De modo, que no puedo pensar cual cosa pudiese ofrezérseme, hoi en dia, que bastase, a quitarme esta confusión, i a calmarme esta inquietúd, i a resolverme esta perplejidad. De esta manera, que os digo, haze ya muchos años que vivo, en los cuales (como sabeis) me han acontezido tántas cosas, que bastarían a alterar un espíritu sosegado, tanto mas, a inquietar, i confundir un ánimo disgustado, i confuso, como es el mio. Sabed, además de esto, que en los sermones primeros que oí a nuestro predicadór, me persuadió con sus palabras, de que por medio de su doctrina, podría serenár i apaziguár mi ánimo: pero hasta

ahora me ha suzedido al revés de lo que pensaba. I aunque atribuya esto, mas a imperfección mía, que a defecto suyo ; todavía me dá pena el ver, que no se haya verificado mi esperanza, i si bien esto podría ser tolerable, el mal, sinembargo, es, que en vez de sanar de una enfermedad, he entrado en otra, sin haber salido de aquella. Esta es una contrariedad grandísima i mui cruel, que siento dentro de mí, tan enojosa i fastidiosa, que, por mi *vida*, muchas vezes se me vienen las lágrimas a los ojos, por no saber qué hazer de mí, ni en quien apoyarme. Esta contrariedad<sup>f. 5.</sup> la enjendraron en mi ánimo los sermones del Predicador, mediante los cuales, me veo fuertemente combatida. De una parte, por el temór del Infierno, i por el amor del paraíso; i de otra, por el temór de las lenguas de las jentes, i por el amor de la honra del mundo. De suerte, que dos temores, i dos amores, o por mejor dezír, dos afectos de temór, i otros dos de amor, son los que pelean en mí, i me tienen tal, haze algunos días. Que si, lo que yo siento, sintieseis; os marabillaríais, cómo, lo pueda yo pasár, i disimulár. Esto es lo que en mí se

halla, i en este estado que os he dicho (mal, o bien, segun he sabido), están mis cosas. I pues que habeis mostrado tanta afición i voluntad de ayudarme en las cosas exteriores, os ruego seais contento, de ayudarme i aconsejarme en estas interiores, puesto, que sé yo mui bien, que si vos quereis, teneis mas parte para ayudarme en estas, que en las otras.

VALDÉS. Dezíd, Señora, libremente, todo lo que de mí quereis: i podeis estar zierta, de que todo aquello, que yo pudiere, i supiere, lo emplearé siempre en servicio vuestro.

JULIA. Con esta confianza, he entablado con vos esta plática: azerca de la cual, quiero primeramente, que me digais, de dónde creeis que nazca la confusión, duda, i perplejidad, que siento en mi ánimo, haze ya tanto tiempo; i si pensais, que pudiera remediarse, i qué medio podría tenerse para esto. I dicho esto, me direis, azerca de la contrariedad en mí nazida, desde que asisto a estos sermones; i si sería posible, por alguna vía, apaziguarla, o por conzierto, o por contienda clara: porque en ninguna manera es posible poder durar mucho, en esta tempestád de afectos i de ape-

titos, de imaginaciones i de diversidad de voluntades: i no quiero que perdais tiempo en excusaros con las acostumbradas, por no dezir finjidas, humildades, que en tal caso muchas vezes se suelen usár.

VALDÉS. Antes, sin mas pensár, luego daré prinzipio. Todavía, primero quisiera, que vos me prometieseis una cosa.

JULIA. ¿ Qué cosa?

VALDÉS. Que si yo os hago capáz de la verdad, de dónde prozeden vuestra confusión, e inquietúd, i contrariedad, i os muestro el camino por el cual os podreis librar de la una i de la otra; me deis vuestra fé i palabra, de que caminaréis por él.

JULIA. Si estuviera yo tan segura de que vos hizierais eso, que dezís, como estoi segura, de que en tal caso haré yo esto, que me pedís, ya comenzaría a tranquilizarme.

VALDÉS. Ahora bien, yo espero, no tanto en mi habilidad, o sufizienza, quanto en la afición, i voluntad que tengo de serviros; i asimismo, en lo vivo de vuestro ingenio, i en lo claro de vuestro juicio, i sobre todo, en la grazia de Dios; que antes que yo de aquí me

parta, no solo sabreis lo que deseais, sinó que entenderéis i conozereis el camino por el cual os podreis librar de la antigua enfermedad, i de la aczidental. Estád atenta, Señora, para que sobre cada cosa de la que os hablare, podais replicarme lo que se os ocurriere:

JULIA. Así lo haré.

f. 6. VALDÉS. Paraque entendais, ¿Señora, de dónde prozede el trabajo i confusión, que habeis dicho sentís, haze ya muchos años, quiero que traigais a vuestra memoria, cómo es hecho el hombre a imájen i semejanza de Dios.

El hom-  
bre imá-  
jen de  
Dios.

JULIA. Dadme a entender, qué cosa es esta imájen i semejanza de Dios.

VALDÉS. Antes, quiero que san Pablo os la declare, i así lo entenderéis, por aquello que dize a los Colozenses, cuando amonestándoles, que uno con otro traten verdad, les aconseja, que para eso se despojen del viejo hombre, con todas sus obras i afectos, i que se vistan del nuevo hombre, el cual se renueva mediante el conozimiento de Dios, conforme a la imájen i semejanza del que lo crió. I tambien lo entenderéis, por lo que dize el mismo



san Pablo a los de Efeso, trayéndoles a la memoria, que con ser cristianos, han aprendido a desnudarse del viejo hombre, i a renovarse espiritualmente, i vestirse del nuevo hombre creado a imájen i semejanza de Dios. De dónde parece, que en tanto el hombre conserva i guarda en sí, la imájen i semejanza de Dios, en cuanto vee, conoze i entiende, i gusta las cosas espirituales, viviendo i conversando espiritualmente. Sabido esto, i examinando qué cosas son las que poneis delante de vuestro ánimo, entenderéis claramente como toda la inquietúd, i todo el afán, i toda la confusión que sentís, prozede, de que vuestro ánimo quisiera, que procuráseis restituirle la imájen de Dios, a la cual fué criado, i de la que parece que le habeis privado, obedeziendo a vuestros afectos; i vos, perseverando en borrar esta imájen, le poneis delante cosas transitórias i terrenas, i en ninguna manera dignas de aquella excellenzia para la cual fué criado. I por eso, no puede satisfacerse, ni contentarse con ninguna de aquellas cosas, i os parece, que no sabe lo que se quiere: i por eso tambien, no azertais vos a ponerle delante aquello que él quisiera.

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Esto mismo que os aconteze, acontezió siempre a las personas del mundo, de ingenio especulativo, i juicio claro, las cuales conoziendo en verdad que sus ánimos no hallaban, ni podian hallar entera satisfaczió en las cosas corporales, se dieron a buscarla en las cosas que pertenezzen al ánimo. Pero como les faltaba la luz sobrenatural, con la cual solamente se halla, vee, i conoze la verdad; continuamente anduvieron peregrinando en diversidad de opiniones i pareceres. I así, unos buscaban la felicidad en una cosa, i otros en otra. Las cuales no me entretendré en referirolas aquí, porque no hazen a vuestro propósito. Basta que sepais, que todos ellos se engañaron, i jamás pudieron imaginár, no díganos azer-tár, con las cosas, en las cuales consiste la felicidad verdadera: i si ellos hubieran tenido una poca de lumbré de fé, fazilísimamente, i con la grazia de Dios, la habrían conseguido, i habrían así aquietado i pazificado sus ánimos.

f. 7. mos. ¿Habeis entendido la causa, de dónde prozede vuestra inquietúd, confusión i trabajo?

JULIA. Sí, mui bien.

VALDÉS. Pues, ahora, sabéd, que se puede remediar mui bien, i que el remedio está en vuestra mano.

JULIA. ¿En mi mano?

VALDÉS. Sí, en vuestra mano, porque siempre que vos querais disponeros, a hazer lo que os digo, i lo que san Pablo dize, en cuanto al renovár i restaurár en vos, la imájen i semejanza de Dios, encontrareis la páz, la quietúd, i el sosiego del ánimo.

JULIA. ¿I como he de hazer esto?

VALDÉS. Apartando vuestro ánimo de las cosas caducas, i transitorias, i aplicándolo a las estables i eternas; no queriendo ni procurando alimentarlo con cosas corporales, sinó espirituales, no alimentándolo de cosas mundanas, sinó de cosas zelestiales. I hallando así vuestro ánimo el verdadero pasto, i viéndose vestido de aquel nuevo hombre, a cuya imájen i semejanza fué creado, vivirá siempre, alegre i contento, i aquí en esta vida comenzará a gustár de aquella felizidád, que esperará gozár perpetuamente en la vida eterna: siendo así, que la felizidád del hombre consiste en Felizidád  
del hom-  
bre. conozer, con la lumbré de la fé, a Dios, por

Cristo, i en la union del alma con Dios, mediante la fé, esperanza, i caridad. A cuya felicidad llega solamente el verdadero cristiano.

JULIA. Bien creería eso que dezís, porque realmente me parece fundado en razón: mas conoziendo yo muchas personas, que tienen tanto, i aun quizá mas de lo que yo la tengo, borrada la imájen de Dios, las cuales, no presentando a sus ánimos cosas mas espirituales, que yo presento al mio, viven a gusto, i hallan contento i satisfacció en las cosas de este mundo; no sé qué cosa creerme.

VALDÉS. Esas tales personas tendrán ánimos bajos i plebeyos; i por eso rezibirán páz con cosas bajas i plebeyas. Pero un ánimo noble i jeneroso, como el vuestro, no puede aquietarse, ni sosegarse, sinó con aquella dignidad, para la que fué creado. Por tanto, vuelvo a dezír, que si estais disgustada, i si vivís en confusión, es porque no volveis vuestro ánimo a las cosas espirituales, i divinas; i porque lo teneis siempre ocupado en la contemplación de estas cosas bajas i transitorias. Esto lo entenderéis mejor por esta comparazió. Dos personas parten de aquí

Compara-  
razió.

para ir a España: de ellas, una es tñ descuidada, i estñ tan olvidada de sí propia, que si le aconteze, en el viaje, alguna cosa agradable, i deleitable, no solamente la toma, i disfruta de ella; sino que olvidado de su viaje prinzipál, con el cuerpo i con el ánimo se alegra, i se entretiene con ella. I, por el contrario, la otra es tan solízita, i diligente, que con todos los pasatiempos i divertimientos, que se la ofrezan, porque sabe, i estñ zierta, de que allí no ha de quedarse, no los gusta, ni se deleita con ellos, antes, muchas vezes la son enojosos, i fastidiosos, considerando, que la son impedimento i embarazo para su camino prinzipál. I esta tal persona, entonzes tendrá menos satisfaciñ de estas cosas, cuando tuviere mas estampado en la memoria, su viaje prinzipál: i aun cuando, a vezes, se olvide<sup>f</sup> de *f. 8.* sí propia, i se olvide de su viaje; todavía la queda un no sé qué impreso en la memoria, que la haze no hallar gusto en cosa alguna de aquellas, que en el viaje se la presentan. De esta misma manera, nos hallamos nosotros en esta vida, pues nazimos todos, i fuimos criados, para conozer a Dios, i creer en Dios, i amar a

Para qué  
somos  
nazidos.

Dios, i después, en la otra vida, gozar de Dios. Sin embargo, hai algunos, que apazentados con los placeres de este mundo, no solo se deleitan, i hallan descanso con ellos, sino que del todo se olvidan de la otra vida, para la cual fueron criados. I también hai otras personas, a las que siéndoles ofrezidos los mismos deleites i placeres, no los gustan, ni toman sabór de ellos, antes, muchas vezes les son fastidiosos e insipidos, teniendo siempre la mira puesta a la otra vida, para la cual Dios las crió. I, aunque olvidadas un zierito tiempo de sí propias, pierdan la memoria de la otra vida; pues Dios está siempre a la puerta i llama, será imposible, que hallen gusto, ni sabór, en las cosas de ésta: i sí pensaren, o procuraren de hallarlo, vivirán en la confusión, inquietúd i fastidio que vos, Señora, vivís. De manera, que pues aquél, que bien sabe gozár de este mundo, goza de él, no como de cosa propia, ni que le haya de durár, sinó como goza el curioso i solízito caminante, de los pasatiempos i fiestas, que se le ofrezan en el camino; soi de parezér, Señora, que vos hagais lo mismo: volvéd en vos, abrid las orejas de vuestra

alma, paraque podais oír las voces de Dios, i pensád, como buena cristiana, que en esta vida no podeis tener mas descanso ni contento, que los que os vinieren mediante el conozi-miento de Dios, i por la fé, i amor de Dios, i mui deveras afirmaos en este pensamiento, dejando a un lado todas las cosas que son transitorias, i que no pueden durar : i haziéndolo así, os prometo, que tardareis mucho menos, en sosegar, i mitigar, i apaziguar á vuestro ánimo, que lo que habeis tardado en inquietarle. I si no os sale esto así, soi contento, de que jamás deis crédito, a ninguna cosa de cuantas yo os dijere.

JULIA. Verdaderamente, que creo habeis adivinado la causa de dónde prozede mi enfermedad, sin errar un punto en ello. O, Dios, ayudadme : ¡cuan ziegas andamos las personas en el mundo ! Asimismo, estoi zierta, que habeis también azertado, en darme la medizina, con la cual sane de la enfermedad. Faltará, que yo me encomiende a Dios, i la tome, que, del sanár, no tengo duda, mayormente teniendo, como tengo, al médico de mi parte.

VALDÉS. El médico verdadero de las almas es Cristo crucificado. Ponéd en Él solo, toda vuestra confianza, i lo azertareis.

JULIA. Porque, de lo que habeis dicho, me ha venido a la memoria una duda, en la cual suelo pensár muchas vezes ; os ruego, que me digais, sobre esto, vuestro parecer.

VALDÉS. Preguntád a vuestro gusto.

JULIA. Querría saber de vos, ¿ de dónde les  
f. 9. viene a las personas', esta zeguedad, de andarse perdidas tras las cosas que deleitan al sentido, olvidadas de aquellas cosas, de que prinzipalmente debieran tener continuo cuidado ?

VALDÉS. Estas son reliquias del pecado orijínal.

JULIA. Esto es lo que no entiendo. Dizen, que en el bautismo nos perdona Dios el pecado orijínal. Pues que así es, que nos le perdona ; ¿ cómo nos deja estas malas inclinaciones, i esta zeguedád ; que son tan perjudiziales para nuestra salvación ?

Pecado  
orijínal. VALDÉS. Esto, Señora, lo habeis de entender de ésta manera : que en el pecado orijínal, se consideran dos cosas, una, la culpa, i otra, la mala inclinación ; que es ésta, de la



cual vos hablais. I así es, que en el bautismo, <sup>Bau-</sup> mediante la fé, Dios nos perdona la culpa del <sup>tismo.</sup> pecado, i en cuanto a la mala inclinazi3n, nos la va curando, poco a poco, i medizinando con su grazia, de tal manera, que tánto podría una persona hazerse perfecta con la grazia i fav3r de Dios, que casi viniese a perder todas las malas inclinaciones, todos los desenfrenados apetitos, i todos los desordenados afectos, que reinan en nosotros por el pecado orijinál. Conforme a esto es lo que dize san Agustin, que el Esp3ritu de Dios restaura, i renueva en nosotros la imájen i semejanza de Dios, a la cual fuimos criados : todav3a lo entenderéis mej3r, por este ejemplo. Tiene <sup>Compa-</sup> un gran Se33or un servid3r, al cual ama <sup>razión.</sup> mucho, i le haze mucho fav3r i grazia. Este haze una ofensa grande al Se33or, por la cual, no solamente le priva de todo su fav3r i de toda su grázia, sin3 que, con justo enojo, le condena a muerte. Aconteze, que, con el tiempo, otra persona azepta al Se33or, ruega por aquel servid3r, al cual el Se33or, por contemplazi3n de aquella tal persona, le perdona la vida ; i aunque no le admite al mismo

grado de favór i grázia, que tenía antes que pecase, le dá entrada en su palázio, i cámara, paraque, con el tiempo, pueda volvér a entrár en el grado que antes estaba.

JULIA. Con el ejemplo, yo lo acabo de entender, i me satisfaze tánto, que quedo tranquila, i sin ningun escrúpulo en cuanto a esto : i no penseis haber hecho poco.

VALDÉS. Si hablase yo con persona de bajo, grosero, i rudo ingenio, creería bien haber hecho alguna cosa ; mas, porque hablo con quien hablo, he menester poca industria, para hazerla capáz de la verdad : de modo, que no tendré de qué gloriarme, sino sólo, del crédito que dais á mis palabras.

JULIA. Ahora bien, dejemos esto, i vengamos a lo que haze al caso, i dezidme vuestro parezér azerca de la contrariedad, que yo siento.

VALDÉS. Digo, Señora, que así como os compadezco, i me duelo, de que vivais en la confusión, de que, hasta aquí, hemos hablado ; así también estoi alegre, i contento, de que sintais la contrariedad, que dezis.

JULIA. ¿ Porqué ?

VALDÉS. Yo os lo diré. Me duelo de la confusión, porque prozede de culpa vuestra, como hemos dicho, i redunda en daño vuestro, f. 10. como vos misma experimentais : i de la contrariedad me alegro, porque conozco, que prozede de esto, que la predicación del Evangelio, haze en vos su primér efecto.

Predica-  
ción del  
Evanje-  
lio.

JULIA. ¿ Porqué llamais a la contrariedad, primér efecto de la predicación evangélica ?

VALDÉS. Porqué, así como la primera cosa que haze la luz, entrando en una cámara oscura, es echár fuera las tinieblas, i manifestár i descubrir lo que con la oscuridad no se veía ; así, de la misma manera, cuando la luz de la verdad evangélica comienza a resplandezér en el ánimo de una persona del mundo, echando, en algun modo, las tinieblas, i oscuridades, tanto de la sensualidad, quanto de la razón humana ; descubre, i saca a luz, lo que estaba cubierto ; i entonces esa tal persona, volviendo en sí, comienza a sentir, cómo, aquello que antes tenía por bueno, es malo ; i aquello, que juzgaba por verdadero, es falso ; i aquello que le parezía dulce, es amargo. I porque, por nuestra incapacidad, i fragilidad, la luz de ésta verdad

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grado de favór i grázia, que tenía antes que pecase, le dá entrada en su palázio, i cámara, paraque, con el tiempo, pueda volvér a entrár en el grado que antes estaba.

JULIA. Con el ejemplo, yo lo acabo de entender, i me satisfaze tánto, que quedo tranquila, i sin ningun escrúpulo en cuanto a esto : i no penseis haber hecho poco.

VALDÉS. Si hablase yo con persona de bajo, grosero, i rudo ingenio, creería bien haber hecho alguna cosa ; mas, porque hablo con quien hablo, he menester poca industria, para hazerla capáz de la verdad : de modo, que no tendré de qué gloriarme, sino sólo, del crédito que dais á mis palabras.

JULIA. Ahora bien, dejemos esto, i vengamos a lo que haze al caso, i dezidme vuestro parezér azerca de la contrariedad, que yo siento.

VALDÉS. Digo, Señora, que así como os compadezco, i me duelo, de que vivais en la confusión, de que, hasta aquí, hemos hablado ; así también estoi alegre, i contento, de que sintais la contrariedad, que dezis.

JULIA. ¿ Porqué ?

VALDÉS. Yo os lo diré. Me duelo de la confusión, porque prozede de culpa vuestra, como hemos dicho, i redunda en daño vuestro, *f. 10.* como vos misma experimentais : i de la contrariedad me alegro, porque conozco, que prozede de esto, que la predicación del Evangelio, Predica-  
ción del  
Evanje-  
lio. haze en vos su primér efecto.

JULIA. ¿ Porqué llamais a la contrariedad, primér efecto de la predicación evangélica ?

VALDÉS. Porqué, así como la primera cosa que haze la luz, entrando en una cámara oscura, es echár fuera las tinieblas, i manifestár i descubrir lo que con la oscuridad no se veía ; así, de la misma manera, cuando la luz de la verdad evangélica comienza a resplandezér en el ánimo de una persona del mundo, echando, en algun modo, las tinieblas, i oscuridades, tanto de la sensualidad, quanto de la razón humana ; descubre, i saca a luz, lo que estaba cubierto ; i entonzes esa tal persona, volviendo en sí, comienza a sentir, cómo, aquello que antes tenía por bueno, es malo ; i aquello, que juzgaba por verdadero, es falso ; i aquello que le parezía dulce, es amargo. I porque, por nuestra incapacidad, i fragilidad, la luz de ésta verdad

evanjélica, no resplandeze, a los prinzipios, tánto en nuestros ánimos, quanto sería menester, para desde luego echár fuera de ellos, del todo, la oscuridad, de tal suerte, que clara i manifestamente pudiésemos conozer el valór i ser de las cosas ; aconteze, que combatiendo todavía las tinieblas con la luz, i la razon humana con el espíritu cristiano ; hazen, que se sientan los terremotos de contrariedades internas, que vos, Señora, sentís. De esto tenemos tantos ejemplos, así en la historia de Cristo, que escribieron los Evanjelistas, como en la que escribió san Lucas de los hechos de los Apóstoles, i como también en las Epístolas de san Pablo ; que si yo quisiese alegaros los lugares, uno por uno, gastaríamos el tiempo en esto, i para no gastarlo, los dejaré, porque vos misma, pues que teneis el Testamento nuevo en vulgár, los leais, señalandooslos yo. Solamente os quiero dezír esto : que podeis tener por don i beneficio de Dios, esta contrariedad que sentís, i que de ella os debeis servir, dando lugar a la luz, que resplandezca mas en vuestra ánima. I de este modo, os librareis de la contrariedad, i os hareis capáz,

para rezibír los otros dones de Dios, que serán dulces i sabrosos: i guárdeos Dios, Señora, de no sentir esta contrariedad, porque [no sentirla] es señal de dureza i ostinación.

JULIA. Al fin, la resoluzión que saco, es esta: que no puedo acabar de entenderos. Todo el tema del predicadór es, dezir, que la predicación del Evangelio aquieta, i apazigua las conzienzias: i vos, ahora, dezís todo lo contrario. No sé qué deziros, sinó, que no os entiendo.

VALDÉS. Pues yo haré, que nos entendais, i entendidos, conozereis, que ambos a dos, dezimos bien, i que no hai contradiczió en nuestras palabras. I es así, que el predicadór dize mui bien, que la predicación del Evangelio aquieta i apazigua las conzienzias. Mas habeis de entender, que haze este efecto en todas aquellas personas, que *f*reziben, i abrazan a *f*. 11. Cristo, mediante la fé: de suerte, que por medio de la predicación del Evangelio, que anunzia remisión i perdón de pecados, por Cristo, la fé apazigua i aquieta las conzienzias, se entiende, las de aquellos, que tienen viva i entera fé. Así mismo, digo yo bien, que la propia predicación, enjendra contrariedad, ter-

rór i espanto, mas en aquellas personas, que, si bien oyen la predicazi3n, no por eso se determinan a abrazarla mediante la fé, ni la consideran, sin3 como si fuese lei de doctrina moral, i hallando, que es contraria a sus afectos i apetitos, i deseando conformarla con ellos, una vez quieren una cosa, i otra vez desean otra, i no acabando de determinarse, sienten bien, uno de los efectos de la predicazi3n evangélica, mas no gozan de su fruto. ¿Habeis entendido?

JULIA. Sí, mui bien, pero no entiendo, porqué os agrada, el verme en esta contrariedad.

VALDÉS. Porque es señal, de que escuchais la doctrina: i si bien, la predicazi3n evangélica, no obra en vos su ofizio prinzipál, que es, el que el predicad3r dize; a lo menos, me alegro, de que haze el ofizio de la lei, que es el que yo digo, i espero en la grazia de Dios, que después, que en vos hubiere hecho ofizio de lei, hará también ofizio de Evangelio.

JULIA. Me pareze, que voi entendiendo lo que quereis dezir, pero tendré gusto en en-



tender, un poco mas particularmente, cuál es el ofizio de la Lei, i cual es el ofizio del Evanjelio.

VALDÉS. Antes, mui bien es, Señora, que entendais lo uno, i lo otro. I sabéd, que la Lei es regla de la conzienzia, i así es, que la La Lei. conzienzia, no es otra cosa, sinó lei entendida: i su ofizio es mostrár el pecado, i tambien aumentarlo. Lo uno i lo otro entendió san Pablo por experienzia, i como bien experimentado, lo escribe a los Romanos en aquella su exzelentísima Epístola: i él mismo dize, que la Lei obra ira, porque las personas se resienten, se enojan, i se alteran, cuando, con lei, son apretadas. Dize mas, que la Lei es espiritual, porque no la guarda enteramente, ni la entiende bien, sinó el hombre espiritual. Los Profetas llaman a la Lei, yugo grave, i zetro riguroso, i otros nombres de esta calidad, que significan severidad. I cuando Dios dió la Lei a Moises, el Pueblo de Israel, que estaba al pie del Monte, sintió grandes truenos, i relámpagos, de suerte, que todos temblaban de miedo i espanto. Lo cual, dizen todos, que significaba el terrór, i el espanto, i la contrariedad de afectos, que la Lei enjendra

en los ánimos de aquellas personas a las cuales es dada. Mas, con todo esto, habeis de saber, Señora, que la Lei nos es mui nezesária, porque si no fuese la lei, no habría conzienzia, i si no fuese la conzienzia, el pecado no sería conozido, i si el pecado no fuese conozido, nosotros no nos humillaríamos, i si nosotros

- f. 12. no nos humillásemos, no adquiriríamos la grazia, i si no adquiriésemos la grazia, no seremos justificados, i no siendo justificados, no salvaremos nuestras almas. I esto creo yo, que quiera entender san Pablo, donde dize, que la Lei, es como un pedagogo, o ayo, que nos conduze, i lleva a Cristo, paraque mediante la fé seamos justificados. Veis aquí el Ofizio de la Lei. El cual ofizio haze, así mismo, el Evangelio, mas en aquellas personas, que no lo reziben, sino como lei: pero en aquellas, que lo reziben, como nunzio, o mensajero de grazia i de paz; su ofizio proprio es, sanár las llagas, que haze la lei, predicár grazia, paz, i remisión de pecados, serenár i pazificar las conzienzias, dár espíritu, con que se cumpla aquello, que la Lei nos muestra de la voluntad de Dios, i con que se combata

El Evan-  
jelio.

con los enemigos del alma, i con que se vengzan i echen por tierra. I así Cristo vino manso, humilde, pazífico, i lleno de amor i de caridad, i no terrible, ni espantoso, como la Lei. De suerte, que la Lei nos enseña lo que hemos de hazér, i el Evangelio nos dá espíritu, con el cual lo podamos efectuar. La Lei haze la llaga, i el Evangelio la sana; i finalmente, la Lei mortifica, i el Evangelio vivifica. No me cuido de ir confirmando esto con autoridades de la sagrada Escritura, por no ocupar tiempo.

JULIA. Hazeis mui bien. No os cuideis de eso, sino deid vuestras razones, que quando dijéreis alguna, que me parezca dura, yo os pediré, que me la confirmeis con alguna autoridad de la Escritura.

VALDÉS. Quede así: i pues que habeis ya entendido el ofizio de la Lei, i el ofizio del Evangelio, i con esto aun os será mas manifesta la causa de donde naze la contrariedad, que sentís; será bien que pasemos adelante.

JULIA. Antes quiero, que todavía me digais algo mas sobre esto.

VALDÉS. No sé qué mas deziros, si no *me* contraigo al *caso* particular.

\*c 4

JULIA. Ahora bien, esto es lo que yo quiero.

Paraiso, e  
Infierno. VALDÉS. El Predicador, Señora, con sus sermones, ha despertado en vuestra memoria, lo que ya vos sabiais del Paraiso, i del Infierno, i ha sabido pintaroslo t  n bien, que el tem  r del Infierno, os haze amar el Paraiso, i el amor del Paraiso, os haze tem  r el Infierno. I como, juntamente con mostraros esto, os dize, que no podeis escapar del Infierno, ni alcanz  r el Paraiso, sin   mediante la observanzia i guarda de la Lei, i Doctrina de Cristo; i como   sta os la declara, de modo, que os parece no podeis cumplirla, sin poneros a peligro de ser motejada, desestimada, despreciada, i tenida en poco, por las personas del mundo; peleando en vos, por una parte, el proveeros para la otra vida, i por otra, el no querer la confusion en esta; se enjendra en vos la contrariedad que sent  s, la cual toda naze del amor propio, con que os amais a vos misma: temeis el Infierno por inter  s vuestro, f. 13. amais el Paraiso por inter  s vuestro: temeis la confusion del mundo por vuestro inter  s, amais la gloria i el hon  r del mundo por vuestro inter  s. De suerte, que en todas las

Am  r  
proprio.

cosas, que temeis, o amais, mirado bien, os encontrareis a vos misma.

JULIA. ¿ Pero, a quién quereis que encuentre yo en mis cosas, sino a mí propia?

VALDÉS. Quiero, que encontréis a Dios, i no a vos, si quereis estar libre de la contrariedad, confusión, inquietud, descontento, i de otros mil inconvenientes más, de los cuales, no os podreis jamás librar: pero, mientras encontráreis a Dios, encontráreis paz, serenidad, quietud, contento, alegría, i espíritu; i tanta infinidad de bienes espirituales, que no sabreis como recojerlos. Ahora, si quereis despreciarlos, i si quereis privaros del Paraíso, i obligaros al Infierno, por no querer salir un poco de vos, i entrár en Dios, védlo vos misma. Por mí tán solo os zertífico, que no habría cosa en el mundo, que me pudiese dar igual satisfacció i contento, como sería, el veros caminar por este camino cristiano: porque conozco al ánimo vuestro, tán bien inclinado, que tengo por zierto, que si comenzaseis a enamoraros de Dios, venzeríais, en santidad, a muchas santas de aquellas, que están en el Zielo.

JULIA. Antes, yo no deseo otra cosa, Dios sabe mi voluntád.

VALDÉS. Pues que la deseais, ¿ porqué no la tomáis?

JULIA. Porque no sé dar modo, para esto.

VALDÉS. Fuerza fuerza, que no modo, Señora, requiere el negozio evangélico. I, por tanto, decía Cristo, que desde el tiempo de san Juan Bautista, padezería fuerza el Reino de los Zielos, i que aquellos que se hazen fuerza a sí propios, son los que lo arrebatan. Por lo que, si vos quereis cojer el Reino de los Zielos, hazeos fuerza a vos misma, i así no temereis cosa ninguna, porque, como decía una gran Señora de España (aunque, creo, no a este propósito), "*Quien, a sí, venze, a nadie teme.*"

JULIA. Dejémonos de palabras, el hecho es, que yo creo bien, que toda mi confusión, mi inquietúd, i mi contrariedad, zesarían, entrando, en el camino de Dios, i por esto, me determinaría desde luego, a entrár en él: pero me parece, que es tán dificultoso de hallarse, que no oso ponerme a buscarlo.

VALDÉS. ¿ Porqué causa os parece, que es dificultoso de hallarse?

JULIA. Porque veo pocos, que caminen por él.

VALDÉS. En cuanto a esto, vos teneis razón, que pocos caminan por él: mas sabéd, que esto, no naze tanto de la dificultad del camino, cuanto de nuestra malizia e imperfeczión. I porque os quiero confirmár en esta verdad, quiero que sepais, que en la vida presente, hallareis zinco maneras de personas. Algunas, que no conozen el camino de Dios, ni le quieren conozer, porque adivinan, que para caminárl por él, conviene privarse de sus pasatiempos i placeres, i estas tales personas, (aunque no con la boca, sino con el corazón,) dicen aquellas palabras, que dize Job, notando la impiedad de los impíos: “Apártate, Señor, de nosotros, <sup>Impios.</sup> porque no queremos conozér ni f. 14. sabér tus ‘caminos.” [Job xxi. 14.] De estas mismas, dize David: “Dijo el nezio, en su corazón, no hai Dios.” [Sal. xiv. 1.] porque, en verdad, no querrían que hubiese Dios. Hallareis otras personas, que conozen el camino de Dios, pero venzidas de sus afiziones, i apetitos, no acaban de determinarse a caminárl por él. De estas tales, dize Cristo, <sup>Ziegos.</sup>

Dificul-  
tád en el  
camino  
de Dios.

Zinco  
modos de  
personas.

Impios.

Ziegos.

Desvari-  
ados.

Supersti-  
ziosos.

“que el siervo, que supiere la voluntad de su Señor, i no la hiziere; será mas asperamente castigado: i así es en verdad, que aun aquí en este mundo sienten las tales un continuo remordimiento de conzienzia, el cual las tiene siempre desabridas i mal contentas. Hallareis otras personas, que quieren, i tienen voluntad de saber, i conozér el camino de Dios, pero estando ligadas al amor de las cosas de esta presente vida, i tomando con ellas demasiado deleite, no las quieren dejár, i así, no se disponen, de modo, que Dios las haya de enseñar, i mostrár su camino. A las tales, pone, luego, el demonio, delante, ziertos caminos simulados, o encubiertos, i dávalas a entender, que aquellos son los verdaderos caminos: i ellas, ziegas con el propio amor de sí mismas, de buena gana se dejan engañar, i dánse a entender, que Dios las lleva, i es el demonio, quien las guía. De aquí nazen, las demasiadas zeremonias, nazen las perniciosas superstiziones, i nazen las falsas devoziones. De estas tales personas dize Dios por Isaías: “Cada día, me van bus-  
“cando, i quieren saber i conozér mis caminos,



“ como jente que haya vivido justamente, i que  
“ no haya abandonado el juizio, i justizia del  
“ Señor Dios suyo.” Hallareis otras personas, <sup>Pru-</sup>  
que quieren conozer este camino de Dios, i se <sup>dentes.</sup>  
disponen a ello. Estas tales, sintiendo en el  
alma la voz de Cristo, que dize: volvéd en  
vosotros, que andais perdidos, no es bueno el  
camino por el cual caminais, porque no se va  
por él al Reino de los Zielos: vuelven en sí, i  
conoziendo, que van perdidas, abandonan el  
camino que seguían, i antes de tomár alguno,  
ruegan a Dios, Que les muestre el verdadero  
camino: i esta es la disposizión. Estas tales,  
sienten, al punto, a Cristo, que les dize:  
“ quien quisiere caminár por el verdadero, i  
“ zierto camino, niégue se a sí misma, i tome  
“ su cruz a cuestras, i sígame, imitándome en  
“ lo que puede imitarme:” i sienten, que en  
otro lugar les declara esto, diziendo: “ A-  
prendéd de mí, que soi manso, i humilde de  
corazón:” i así, al instante, entran por el  
camino de la negazión de la propia voluntád,  
i de la pazienza, i verdadera humildád. Hal- <sup>Santos.</sup>  
lareis otras personas, que conozen el camino  
de Dios, i caminan por él, algunas con mas,

i mayor fervór, que otras; no obstante, *con tal* que ni unas, ni otras, se aparten del camino, ni le abandonen, van bien: i estas, en verdad, son pocas, como vos, Señora, dezís; aunque no son tán pocas, como pensais, porque, por ser el camino de ellas espiritual,

f. 15. no pudiendo ser vistas sino con ojos espirituales, no es posible que sean conozidas, sino por las mismas personas que caminan por el mismo camino. Estas viven con ánsia continua de no ofender a Dios: i, si a veces, por fragilidad, vencidas de la tentazón, caen en algun pecado mortal; luego se vuelven a Dios, i confiesan su pecado, i no tienen necesidad de muchos aparejos para la confesión: porque, como dize David, hablando de sí, tienen siempre su pecado delante de sus ojos. Estas mismas personas tienen algunos defectos, i algunos descuidos, que son señales, de que sus ánimos no están del todo mortificados. Al fin, sus defectos, i sus descuidos, muchas veces les son a ellas causa de provecho, porque se reconocen, i se humillan, i aprenden así a desconfiar de sí propias, i a confiarse en Dios. I por esto dize san Pablo, que a los que aman

a Dios, todas las cosas les ayudan a bien: i por esto dize en otro lugar, que ninguna cosa hai *capáz* para condenár a aquellas personas, que habiendo entrado por este camino, están unidas con Cristo Jesus, por fé i amor. Las primeras personas son impias, las segundas ziegas, las terceras desvariadas, las cuartas prudentes, i las quintas santas. De modo, que si caminan pocas personas por el camino Cristiano, podeis ver, que es, mas por la impiedad, zeguedád, i veleidad, que por la dificultad: i visto esto, no tendreis miedo de encontrarlo. I pues que (como pienso) sois vos, Señora, de las cuartas personas; hazed de modo, que escucheis la voz de Cristo, porque Él os pondrá en el verdadero camino: i tenéd por zierto, que luego que hayais entrado, no sentireis mas confusión, ni inquietúd, ni trabajo, ni perplejidad, i finalmente, no sentireis contradiczió alguna, antes, por el contrario, sentireis mucha paz, mucha alegría, mucha satisfaczió, i gran contentamiento.

JULIA. Todo quanto dezis me satisfaze. I pues que yo determinadamente quiero entrar en este camino, resta, que vos me lleveis de

la mano, enseñándome aquellos pasos, por los cuales creo, que vos hayais caminado.

VALDÉS. No sé qué mas querais aprender de mí, de lo que cada día os dize el predicadór.

JULIA. Yo soi debil, i no puedo hazer tanta resistenzia a mi ánimo, cuanta sería menestér, para hazer todo lo que dize el predicadór.

VALDÉS. Ya, Señora, ha buen rato, que yo os entiendo, ¿Qué nezesidad hai de andár por las ramas? Bien sé yo, lo que vos querríais.

JULIA. ¡Que enfado! Pues que lo sabeis, ¿porqué no lo dezís?

VALDÉS. Porque aguardaba, a que vos, con vuestra boca, lo dijeseis.

JULIA. Hazedme el plazér de dezirlo, puesto que lo entendeis, i yo os diré la verdád, de si azertais en todo, i por todo.

Camino  
real.

VALDÉS. Soi contento. Vos, Señora, deseais veros libre de las cosas enojosas, que os pasan por la imaginazi3n, i habiendo conozido, que éste es el camino verdadero, para libraros de ellas, querríais, que yo os mostrase un

f. 16. camino real, i señoril, ¿por el cual pudiérais llegar a Dios, sin apartaros del mundo, llegar

a la humildád interiór, sin mostrár la interiór, poseér la virtúd de la pazienza, sin que os aconteziese cosa donde ejerzitarla, despreziár el mundo, mas, de tal manera, que el mundo no os despreziáse\* a vos, vestir a vuestra alma de virtudes cristianas, sin desnudaros el cuerpo de las usuales vestiduras, mantenér vuestra alma con manjares espirituales, sin privár a vuestro cuerpo de las viandas acostumbradas, parezér bien a los ojos de Dios, sin parezér mal a los ojos del mundo; i, en fin, por este camino, vos quisiérais poder hazer vuestra vida cristiana, pero de modo, que ninguna persona del mundo, por mucha familiaridád i conversazió, que con vos tuviese, pudiese conozér, en vuestra vida, mas deloque al presente conoze. ¿He azertado?

JULIA. Casi, casi: o, a lo menos, si no habeis azertado, podeis dezír, que habeis casi tocado en el hito.

VALDÉS. Esto me basta, para poderos dezir, que según yo veo, quisiérais mas bien libraros de la contradiczió que sentis, por avenenzia, que por sentenzia.

JULIA. ¿ Pues no me dezís vos siempre, que mas vale mala avenenzia, que buena sentenzia?

\*D

VALDÉS. Sí digo, mas no en este caso, en el que la avenenzia es mui peligrosa, i terriblemente dañosa. ¿No sabeis, que dize Cristo, que no podemos servir a Dios, i al mundo; sinó que, o hemos de amar al mundo, i despreziar a Dios; o hemos de amar a Dios, i despreziar al mundo? ¿I no habeis oido lo que dize Job, que la vida del hombre, aquí en el mundo, no es otra cosa, que una continua guerra? Mas entendéd, que la guerra es, entre la carne i el espíritu, quando la carne nos tira ázia el mundo, i el espíritu nos tira ázia Dios. ¡I tristes de aquellos, que no sienten esta guerra!

JULIA. Ahora pues, yo entiendo, i conozco bien lo uno i lo otro, i quiero, que, sin mas encarezérmelo, resueltamente me digais, si os basta el ánimo, a ponerme en un camino, que tire, un tanto, al que vos habeis señalado, aunque no sea tan lizenzioso: porque no estoi tan sujeta a mis apetitos, como vos debeis imaginár, segun lo habeis mostrado por vuestras palabras.

VALDÉS. Si yo, Señora, conoziese en vuestro modo de vivir, i conversár exterior, alguna cosa deshonesta i fea, i que tuviese

alguna reliquia, o alguna muestra, o aparien-  
zia de mal; libremente os diría, que no me  
bastaba el ánimo, para satisfazeros en esto  
que deseais, porque en tal caso, siendo neze-  
sario que dejaseis todo lo que fuese malo, era  
preziso, que se viese en vos otra cosa, de lo  
que ahora se veé i conoze. Pero conoziendo  
yo, en vuestros modos de vivir, i conversár,  
tanta honestidád, i tánta compostura de cos-  
tumbres, quanto en una tal Señora se puede  
deseár; i viendo, que toda la reformazió, que  
es nezesaria, para conquistár i alcanzár el  
fin que deseais, consiste en los afectos, i en los  
apetitos del ánimo, los cuales corregidos, i re-  
formados, sería cosa fázil reformár lo exterior<sup>f</sup> f. 17.  
en lo que pareziese tener nezesidád de refor-  
mazió; oso deziros, que me basta el ánimo, a  
poneros en el camino que deseais, de tal manera,  
que si os disponeis vos para ello, con la grazia  
de Dios, sin que persona del mundo pueda co-  
nozeroslo, antes que pasen muchos días, comen-  
zareis a sentir la paz de conzienzia, i los otros  
frutos que sienten las personas espirituales.

JULIA. Si esto vos hizieseis, yo os quedaría  
obligada perpetuamente.

VALDÉS. Pues yo lo haré, con la grázia de Dios, i no quiero, quedeis, obligada sinó al mismo Dios, del cual quiero, que siempre reconozcais todo aquello que fuere bueno.

JULIA. Yo procuraré hazerlo como dezís. Vos hazéd ahora, lo que a vos toca.

VALDÉS. Soi contento, mas dezídme antes, si alguna vez habeis pasado un rio por vado.

JULIA. Sí hé, i muchas vezes.

Compa-  
razión.

VALDÉS. ¿ I habeis observado, cómo, si mirais al agua, parece, que se os vaya la cabeza, de tal modo, que si no acudieseis presto, o con zerrár los ojos, o con fijarlos en la orilla que teneis en frente, caeríais en el agua, con peligro grande de anegaros?

JULIA. Sí que lo he visto.

VALDÉS. ¿ I habeis visto, como, teniendo siempre por objeto de la vista, la tierra que está de la otra parte, no sentís tal desvanecimiento de cabeza, i así no correis peligro de anegaros?

JULIA. I tambien he visto esto.

VALDÉS. Conque, si vos, Señora, quereis pasar por el rio corriente de las cosas de este mundo, hazéd de modo, que no pongais afizionadamente los ojos en ellas, paraque no os



acontezca, lo que aconteze, a los que mirando el agua, caen en ella, i se ahogan : i procurád, que siempre los ojos de vuestra alma estén fijos, i clavados en Cristo cruzificado : i si alguna vez, descuidada, pusiereis los ojos en las cosas del mundo, de tal manera, que sintais que vuestro ánimo se inclina a ellas, revolved sobre vos misma, i tornád a ponér vuestros ojos en Cristo cruzificado, i de este modo andarán bien vuestras cosas. I por esto, sobre todas las cosas quiero, Señora, que tomeis por vuestro prinzipál intento, enamoraros de Cristo, regulando todas vuestras obras, todas vuestras palabras, i todos vuestros pensamientos, por aquél divino mandamiento que dize : “ Amarás al Señor tu Dios, “ con todo tu corazón, con toda tu alma, i “ con todas tus fuerzas ; i al prójimo como a “ tí mismo.” I digo, que tengais este mandamiento por vuestra regla prinzipál, porque la perfección cristiana consiste en amar a Dios sobre todas las cosas, i al prójimo, como a vos misma.

Perfec-  
ción cris-  
tiana.

JULIA. Maravíllome de esto, que dezís, porque toda mi vida he oído dezír, que los

frailes i las monjas, tienen el estado de perfección por los votos que hazen, si los guardan.

**Frailes i Monjas.** VALDÉS. Dejadlos dezír, Señora, i creed-me; que tánto tendrán de perfección cristiana los frailes, i los no frailes, quanto tuvieren de fé i amor de Dios, i ni un adarme de mas.

f. 18. JULIA. Mucho me agradaría, que me hiziéseis capáz de esto.

**Amor propio.** VALDÉS. De mui buena gana. Habeis de sabér, Señora, que el corazón humano es inclinado naturalmente a amár: de tal suerte, que, o ha de amár a Dios, i, por Dios, a todas las cosas; o ha de amár a sí mismo, i por sí, a todas las cosas. El que se ama a sí propio, todas las cosas haze por él propio, quiero dezir, que en tanto se mueve a ellas, en quanto le convida a ello su propio interés: i así, si alguna cosa ama fuera de él propio, la ama por sí, i por interés suyo; i si tiene algun amor a Dios, tiénelo por su interés, i no por otro respeto. Este tal, fraile o no fraile, porque tiene su amor desordenado, teniéndolo puesto en sí; no sabe jamás cómo, ni de qué modo, ha de amár las cosas criadas: antes, quando quiere bien disponerse a amár a Dios,

porque no azierta a salir de sí, no halla jamás el camino, i por eso continuamente va peregrinando en parezeres, i estando siempre así desordenado, i desconzertado, en sus afectos malos o buenos, vive mui fuera de la perfección cristiana, i vivirá tanto mas fuera, cuanto mas enamorado estuviere de sí, aunque en las obras exteriores fuere perfectísimo, porque Dios quiere el corazón. El que ama a Dios, todas las cosas que haze, házelas por Dios, quiero dezír, que se mueve a ellas, por el amor que tiene a Dios, i esto con tanto fervór o ímpetu, quanto el amor le inzita i mueve. I así, si alguna cosa ama fuera de Dios, ámala por Dios, i porque así lo quiere Dios; i semejantemente, ama a sí propio, porque conoze, que Dios quiere, que él se ame. Este tal, fraile o no fraile, porque tiene ordenado su amor en Dios, i ahí toma el modo i manera, como ha de amár todas las cosas criadas; es mui ordenado i arreglado en su amor, i no ama desordenadamente cosa alguna. I entonzes sus buenas obras, aplazen i son gratas delante de Dios, porque se mueve a obrár con ímpetu de amor, porque, así como

Amór de  
Dios.

Dios es  
amór.

Dios es amor, así no le agrada obra alguna, que no sea hecha por amor. Conforme a esto es lo que dize san Agustin : que las buenas obras, siguen al ya justificado, i no van delante de aquel, que ha de ser justificado. Quiero dezír, que nuestras obras, entonzes son buenas, quando son hechas por persona ya justificada, i no puede ser justificada ninguna, si no está en amor i caridad con Dios, i con su prójimo. De modo, que una persona será tanto mas perfecta, quanto estuviere mas ferviente en este amor. Por vos misma os podreis confirmar en esta verdad, considerando, quanto estimaríais lo que híziese una persona en vuestros negocios, quando conoziéseis, que a ello no se movía por amor que os tuviese, sino por algun otro designió suyo. Mas, pues que vos quereis, que os sirva por amor, uno que no nazió con la obligación de amaros, como nazimos todas las personas para amár a Dios ; pensád si querrá siquiera Dios de nosotros, lo mismo

f. 19. que vos quereis : quanto mas' de aquellas personas, que somos rejeneradas, i renazidas en Cristo, por nueva rejeneración espiritual me-

diante la fé, i el bautismo : porque nosotros tales, tenemos una nueva obligazi3n de amár a Dios : ¿ qué digo, una ? antes, debía dezír, infinitas, pues que vemos, que infinitamente nos amó i ama Cristo, i por infinitas vías i maneras procuró, i procura, de traernos a sí, i unirnos con sigo, por amor i por grazia. I considerando esto, estoi zierto, que os hareis capáz de esta verdad : que la perfeczi3n cristiana consiste en amár a Dios, i que tanto mas perfecto será cada uno, cuanto mas amare a Dios : ahora haga v3tos, ahora no los haga, con tal, que guarde el voto que hizo en el bautismo, mediante el cual somos cristianos.

JULIA. Ya quedo yo satisfecha, con lo que habeis dicho de la perfeczi3n, de tal modo, que conozco ya, por vuestras razones, lo que hasta aquí no había conozido. I pues que quereis, que yo tenga por prinzipál intenzi3n el amor de Dios i del prójimo, para ser perfecta cristiana, i yo me determino a hazerlo así, será bien, si os pareze, que me deis algunas reglas, por las cuales yo entienda i sepa, qué es lo que yo he de hazer, i cómo he de gobernarme, para no apartarme del amor de

Dios, ni del prójimo : porque determinada-mente me quiero dar a enamorarme tánto de Dios, que prive de grazia a vos, i a otros ziento como vos.

VALDÉS. Privar de grazia no : antes, sabéd, Señora, que en este divino amor no hai zelos, porque de por sí es comunicable. I así es, que quanto mas vos amáreis a Dios, tanto mas os alegrareís, que Dios nos ame a nosotros, i que Dios sea amado por nosotros. Mas dejando esto, hasta que con el tiempo lo aprendais por experienzia, digo, Señora, que no hai mejores reglas, para esto que dezís, que aquellas, que el mismo Dios nos ha dado en su perfectísima lei, la cual entendamos no como Hebreos, mas como Cristianos, en la forma i manera, que Cristo la declaró. Ella nos enseña lo que hemos de hazér, para no apartarnos del amor de Dios, ni del prójimo.

Diez  
manda-  
mientos.

JULIA. Si no os es molesto, puesto que dezís, que son buenas las reglas de la lei de Dios para lo que yo deseo, será bien, que brevemente me las declareis, de la manera que vos las entendeis.

VALDÉS. Antes lo haré de mui buena

gana, porque conozco, que para conduziros i traeros al camino que he señalado, esta es la puerta. Mas porque no quiero que mis palabras enjendren escrúpulos en vuestra conzienzia, os quiero antes avisar de esto : que yo os declararé la lei de Dios, no de la manera, que estais obligada a observarla, so-pena de pecado mortál, sinó de la manera, que la deben entender todas aquellas personas, que desean ser tán señoras de sus propios afectos i apetitos, que en todas las cosas sean obedientes al espíritu. Porque así como vá a peligro de envenarse, el que lleva una víbora, o un alacrán en el seno ; así vá a gran peligro *f. 20.* de pecár mortalmente, el que lleva vivos i enteros sus afectos i apetitos.

JULIA. Hallado la habeis, la escrupulosa. No os cureis de más, sinó comenzád a dezír, que yo estaré tan atenta, que quizá no perderé una sola palabra.

VALDÉS. Así lo debeis hazér. Tomareis por primera regla, hazér a Dios de tál manera Amár a  
señór absoluto de vuestro corazón, que no Dios.  
confíe, ni espere, en cosa alguna criada, ni Regla  
ame, ni tema, sinó solo a Dios. De modo, primera.

que entonces podreis hazer cuenta, que teneis vuestro corazón ordenado conforme a esta regla, quando despojada de todo afecto humano, sentireis en vos, que ni las prosperidades os levantan, ni las adversidades os abajan, ni los honores os ensoberbezen, ni las injurias os abaten, i que, con esto, creéis en Cristo, esperais en Cristo, i amais a Cristo, i vivís segura i contenta con Cristo, abrazando la cruz de Cristo, i teniendo por dulce el padezer con Cristo, i teniendo en abominación la gloria del mundo, i teniendo por amargos los plazerres del mundo. I porque no basta, que el corazón esté de esta manera, si la boca no se conforma con él, conviene, que tomeis por freno para ella, la segunda Regla, i ésta será, que continuamente alabeis, magnifiqueis, invoqueis, i bendigais el nombre de Dios, despreciando, i teniendo en poco vuestro nombre i vuestra gloria, de tal suerte, que toda la gloria, i el honor, sea atribuída al omnipotente Dios, al cual siempre irán enderezadas vuestras palabras. I porque con nuestros juramentos se ofende mucho la Majestád divina, tendreis siempre en la memoria aquel-

Alabár  
a Dios.  
Regla se-  
gunda.



las palabras de Cristo, donde, luego que nos ha recordado, que de ningun modo juremos, dize: “sea vuestro hablar, es, es: no, no:” queriendo dezir, que cuando quisiéremos afirmar una cosa, la afirmemos con un senzillísimo *sí*, i cuando quisiéremos negár otra, la neguemos con otro tal *no*. Porque cuando mas de esto se dize, es señal de que el corazón está indispuerto. Además de esto, porque Dios no se contenta con ser absoluto Señor de nuestros corazones, i de nuestras bocas, sinó que quiere gobernár nuestras obras, tomareis por tercera regla hazer una oferta a Dios de toda vuestra voluntad, remitiéndola en todo i por todo a su divina majestád, de tal modo, que Él la rija, i Él la gobierne, sin que vos en vuestras cosas pongais nada de lo vuestro. I este remitiros a la divina voluntad, habeis de sabér, Señora, que es, zelebrár el sábado Cristiano: porque por el reposo corporal, se entiende el reposo espiritual, i por las obras serviles, se entienden las obras del pecado. Esta oferta nos ruega san Pablo que hagamos, diziendo: “ruegoos, hermanos, por la misericordia que Dios ha usado con

Ofrezér  
la vo-  
luntád a  
Dios.  
Regla iij.

Sabado  
cristiano.

nosotros, que ofrezcais vuestros cuerpos en sacrificio vivo, santo, i agradable a Dios, de manera, que enteramente le ofrezcais toda vuestra voluntad, todo vuestro entendimiento, f. 21. i toda vuestra memoria. I ruegoos también, que no conformeis vuestras obras, con las obras de las personas del mundo, i que os transformeis por renovación espiritual de vuestras ánimas, paraque, por esta vía, podais saber i entender la voluntad de Dios. Véd aquí, Señora, tres reglas, según tres mandamientos de la Lei de Dios, las cuales son tan espirituales, que mientras las observáreis, podreis estar zierta, de que amais verdaderamente a Dios, de la manera, que Él quiere ser amado. I pensád, que tanto estareis mas zerca, o mas lejos, de la perfeczió de este amor, cuanto sintiéreis, que los afectos i apetitos vuestros, están mas zerca, o mas lejos, de conformarse con estas tres reglas: las cuales os ruego, que imprimais en vuestra memoria. I aunque en verdad sea así, que mientras viviéreis conforme a estas reglas, viviendo con amor de Dios, vivireis en amor del prójimo, de modo, que pareze de más

daros, por esto, regla alguna; todavía, considerando, que Dios, para socorrer a nuestra incapacidad, nos ha dado tambien reglas, con las cuales viviésemos en amor del prójimo; os quiero yo desír las mismas. I así las dichas, como las que se dirán, tomareis como reglas de Dios, i no más. I la primera será, Para  
amár al  
prójimo.  
Regla  
primera. que por ser así la voluntad de Dios, con obediencia interiór obedezcais, i esteis sujeta a vuestros padres, a vuestros mayores, a vuestros superiores, de cualquier preeminencia, o autoridad que sean, no haziéndoles resistenzia, ni murmurando de ellos. I mirád, Señora, que no penseis contentaros con la sujezión exterior: porque Dios no se contenta, con que sus mandamientos sean observados solo en aparienzia, antes, prinzipalmente, quiere el corazón. I porque las cosas del mundo, con las cuales mas se corrompe la caridad cristiana, son las contiendas, los odios, i las enemistades, de las cuales prozeden los homizidios; advertíd, Señora en tomár por segunda regla, Regla  
segunda. hazer vuestro ánimo paziente, quieto, pazífico, humano, misericordioso: desterrando, i desarraigando del todo, el afecto del odio, de la ira, i

de la venganza. I haziendo esto así, vivireis conforme a aquella doctrina de Jesu Cristo, que en sustanzia dize, que no nos airemos contra nuestros prójimos, ni los despreziamos con ademanes exteriores, ni los vituperemos con palabras injuriosas. I pensád, que no podreis hazér esto, si antes no componeis vuestra alma de la manera que yo os he dicho. I porque sepais cuánto os importa, sabéd, que dize san Juan, que aquél, que aborrezze a su prójimo, es homizida. De modo, que pues para no ser homizida, es menester, que muera en vos todo afecto de ira, i de venganza, de rencór, i de mala voluntád; comenzád, Señora, de aquí adelante, a hazer esta mortificazió: porque cuanto mas pronto la comenzáreis, mas presto saldreis con ella, i pasareis al ejerzizio de la regla tercera. Esta será, que procureis, quanto os fuere posible, tenér mortificados

f. 22. de tal manera todos vuestros sentidos\* exteriores, que por ellos no pase jamás a vuestro ánimo cosa fea, ni dishonesta. Porque Dios quiere, que vuestras obras, vuestras palabras, i vuestros pensamientos sean castos i honestos. I para poder hazer esto, conviene, que tengais

Regla  
tercera.

vuestros afectos tan mortificados como os he dicho: i conviene también, que seais templada en el comer, en el beber, i en el dormir, en conversar con las personas del mundo, i en fin, en todas aquellas cosas, que pueden enjendrár en vuestro ánimo algún deseo deshonesto. I sabéd, de zierto, que tanto para conservár nuestros ánimos puros i limpios, cuanto porque no se ofenda la caridad cristiana, es nezesario, que mueran del todo, estos apetitos laszivos, de los cuales nazen muchos inconvenientes contra el amor del prójimo. Apetitos  
laszivos.

I por eso, Cristo zerrándonos el camino, dize, que el que mirare una mujer, i la deseare, ha pecado ya con ella en su corazón. Por esto, el que no quisiere pecár, procure, que muera con él, el afecto i el apetito de pecár. Además de esto, porque este *mío* i *tuyo*, son enemigos mortales de la caridad cristiana, nos proveyó Dios de una sana, santa, i nezesaria doctrina, la cual tomareis por cuarta Regla. Esta es, Regla  
iiij. que de tál manera mortifiqueis en vos, todo el deseo, i el apetito de aquellas cosas, que las personas del mundo llaman bienes, que no poniendo en ellos felicidad alguna, no deseéis

E

los que nouviéreis, i poseais los que teneis, no como propietaria, sinó como depositaria, de tal modo, que si os fueren quitados, no os perturbeis de suerte, que vengais a tener mala voluntad a aquél, o a aquellas personas, que os los quitaren. Porque teniendo vuestro ánimo tán bien dispuesto, voluntariamente hareis lo que dize Cristo, así en cuanto a dejár el manto, a quien quisiere llevaros a pleito por la túnica, como en cuanto a dár de vuestros bienes a todos cuantos os pidieren.

Liberali-  
dad i  
póbreza  
cristiana.

I esta es la liberalidad cristiana, i esta es la verdadera pobreza tan loada i recomendada en la sagrada Escritura. I creo, ziertó, que David, por esto llama pobres, a las personas que sirven i obedezén a Dios. I tenéd por ziertó, que esta es la verdadera via, para echár i arrancár de vuestro ánimo la maldita

Avarizia.

avarizia, que es un mal tan intrínseco, que, por lo común, aquellos le conozén menos, que están mas conjuntos con él. Mas, preguntád a san Pablo, el inconveniente que de él se sigue, i él os dirá, que la avarizia es servidumbre de Idolos. Así como Dios, queriendo, que no ofendiésemos al amor divino con

la boca, nos puso la segunda regla, que os he dicho, hablando de la guarda que habeis de tener, para el amor de Dios; así también para la guarda [del amor] del prójimo, nos puso regla en la boca, i ésta será la quinta. Regla v. Esta es, que tengais tan bien rejida i gobernada vuestra lengua, que no la useis jamás, sinó para gloria de Dios, i para utilidad espiritual, o corporal de vuestro prójimo, i vuestra. f. 23. quitando, i separando de vós, todas las ocasiones, que os pueden conduzir, i tirár, a que salga de vuestra boca, palabra que ofenda, o pueda ofender, a la mas despreciada i abatida persona de todas cuantas hai en el mundo. I paraque veais cuánto importa esto, quiero que sepais, que Santiago dize, que el que no peca con la lengua, és hombre perfecto. I advertíd, Señora, que no os digo Aviso cristiano. yo, que una persona, para guardar perfectamente el mandamiento del amor del prójimo, ha de hazer todas estas cosas puntualmente; porque no digo, sino que una persona, que quiere ser perfecta, ha de tener tan bien moderados i obedientes sus afectos, que quando nezesitase hazerlo, por honra de Dios, no

Regla  
jeneral.

hallase repugnanzia en ellos. I, concluyendo, digo, que conforme a estas zinco reglas, que habeis oído, debeis componer vuestro ánimo, si queréis adquirir perfectamente el amor del prójimo, i manteneros en él: las cuales comprehendió Cristo en una sola regla, diziendo: Hazéd con los hombres todo aquello, que quisiereis, que hizieren con vosotros. I es así, que no hai persona en el mundo, a quien no le guste el ser obedezida por los que la deben obediencia: no hai persona a quien no le guste conservar su vida, i no ser mal querida ni odiada por otro: no hai ninguna, a quien no le guste, que las personas no entren en ningun mal pensamiento con sus mujeres, hijas, hermanas, o parientas, mucho mas en obras deshonestas: no hai ninguna, a quien no le guste ser socorrida, i ayudada en sus nezesidades; i si tiene con qué vivir, que no procure el que no le sea quitado, ni usurpado: i finalmente, no hai ninguna, a quien no le guste, que todas las personas del mundo hablen bien de ella; i que no se duela de lo contrario. De modo, que haziendo con nuestros prójimos todo lo que quisiéramos, i nos gus-



taría, que ellos hiziesen con nosotros; cumplimos la lei de Dios, porque nos mantenemos con ellos en caridad i amor. I de esto (como dize Cristo) dependen la lei i los profetas: i a esto podeis reduzir todo quanto está escrito en la sagrada escritura.

JULIA. Me teneis tán atónita, desde que comenzásteis a entrar en estas reglas, considerando la perfeczi3n, que para vivir conforme a ellas es nezesaria; que no he querido replicaros a cosa, de quanto habeis dicho. Mas, pues que habeis acabado, quiero que me digais, si se condenan todas las personas, que no viven con la pureza, con la limpieza, i con la atenzi3n, que vos habeis dicho en estas reglas.

VALDÉS. San Juan, en una de sus epístolas, dize: “Hijitos mios, yo escribo a vosotros estas cosas, paraque no pequeis: pero si alguno hubiere pecado, tenemos abogado justo, para con su Padre, a Jesu Cristo, i él es la propiziación por nuestros pecados.” Esto mismo os digo yo a vos, Señora; que os pongo delante esta perfeczi3n, para que trabajando, i procurando de vivir conforme a f. 24. ella, no pequeis jamás. Mas quiero, que si

Consuelo  
de  
s. Juan.

pecareis, os recordeis, que Jesu Cristo, es vuestro abogado, zerca de su eterno Padre, el cual satisfizo por nuestros pecados, i por los de todo el mundo. De modo, que no penseis, que las personas, que no tienen t  n mortificados sus afectos, como yo digo, que deseo, que vos los tengais, seg  n os he mostrado por estas reglas, se condenar  n. Mas quiero, que sepais, que de las que no llegaren a esta perfecci  n, se salvar  n aquellas, que habiendo abierto los ojos, i conozido su mal camino, i hallado el camino que ense  a Cristo, segun aqu   os he dicho, buenamente, en cuanto la fragilidad humana lo sufre, trabajan, i procuran de camin  r por este camino, mortificando su viejo hombre, i vivificando el nuevo, i mientras que no lo alcanzan, conozen i confiesan con dolor de su   nimo, que no son tales, cuales Dios quiere que sean, i con este vivo conozimiento, dicen de todo coraz  n aquello del Padrenuestro,—“*perd  nanos nuestras deudas,*”—i aquello de David,—“*Cr  a en m  , Dios, un coraz  n limpio, i rae mi iniquidad:*” i, “*porque yo conozco mi iniquidad, i mi pecado est   siempre delante de m  .*” I si todas las

personas que caminan por el camino cristiano, siempre viviesen tan perfectamente, como aquí hemos dicho, no diría san Juan<sup>1</sup>, que, “*si dezimos, que no tenemos pecados, mentimos:*” ni diría el sábio, “*que el justo cae siete vezes al día, i que otras tantas vuelve a levantarse.*”

I sabéd, Señora, que es Justo, porque vá por el camino de justizia, el cual es aquél, que Cristo nos enseñó; i que cae por fragilidad, i se torna a levantar, por la fé, i confianza, que tiene en Jesu Cristo, que le perdonará: i estas son las enfermedades, i debilidades, de las cuales entiende san Pablo, cuando, hablando de Cristo, dize, *que tenemos Pontífize, que puede compadezarse de nuestras enfermedades*, habiendo estado vestido del hábito de nuestra humanidad. Todo el negozio consiste, en salir una vez del camino del mundo, i entrár en el camino de Dios, que después de entrados, cayendo, i levantando, tropezando, i no cayendo, todavía nuestras cosas van bien. Por tanto, no os espante la pureza de esta perfeczion cristiana, antes, os suplico, que de veras os enamoreis de ella, porque os zertifico, que

<sup>1</sup> *Girolamo*, en el orijínal, por equivocazion.

no la entenderéis jamás, si antes Dios intrínsecamente no os la enseña. I paraque os la enseñe, conviene, que vos os dispongais a experimentarla.

JULIA. Esto querría, que me diéseis a entender: a qué propósito nos puso Dios una Lei tão dificultosa de observár, que siempre nos tuviésemos que confesar por deudores suyos; porque, al parecer, tiene no sé que olór de tiranía.

La lei  
porqué  
es difizil.

VALDÉS. Antes sabéd, Señora, que en esto ha mostrado Dios el amor que nos tiene, tan bien, como en todo lo demás que ha hecho por  
f. 25. nosotros: siendo así, que el ánimo humano es tan arrogante, que si no se conoziese por deudór del cumplimiento de la lei, no se tendría por pecadór, i si no se tuviese por pecadór, no temería el juizio de Dios, i si no lo temiese, no se humillaría, i si no se humillase, no adquiriría la grazia de Dios; i sin la grazia de Dios, no podría ser justo delante de Dios, i no siendo justo, no se salvaría. Ahora, pensad si fué éste, singularísimo beneficio de Dios, así bien como todos los otros. I sabéd, Señora, que cuanto una persona, en esta pre-

sente vida, fuere mas perfecta, i estuviere mas unida con Dios, por amor i caridad; tanto mas se humillará delante de Dios, conoziendo mas su imperfeczi3n, i la nezesidad que tiene, de que continuamente Dios le perdone sus faltas, i purifique, i azepte sus obras. I por eso David llama bienaventurados, no a aquellos que no pecan, porque todos pecamos, sin3 a aquellos, a los cuales Dios perdona los pecados que hazen. ¿ Quedais satisfecha con esto ?

JULIA. Si quedo : bien podeis seguir mas adelante.

VALDÉS. Ahora, quiero que penseis, que de tres modos pecamos en esta presente vida, por malizia, por ignoranzia, i por frajilidad. Por malizia pecan aquellos, que no saben el camino de Dios, ni le quieren saber. El pecado de estos, segun san Pablo, es castigado con zeguedád, i con obstinazi3n en el pecado. La misma sentenzia pronunzia Dios por Jeremías. Estos con dificultad se levantan, segun el mismo Jeremías dize. Por ignoranzia pecan aquellos, que por no saber azertar el camino de Dios, van fuera de él. El pecado de estos, segun san Pablo, es fazil de per-

Tres modos de pecar.

Malizia.

Ignoranzia.

Frajili-  
dád.

donar : porque así dize él, que porque pecó por ignoranzia, persiguiendo a los cristianos, tuvo Dios misericordia de él. Por frajilidad pecan aquellos, que habiendo entrado en el camino de Dios, no quisieran de modo alguno ofendér a su divina Majestád, mas, a veces, vencidos de la tentazion, caen. De éstos fué David, i de éstos fué san Pedro cuando negó a Cristo. El pecado de los semejantes, perdona Dios mas fazilmente, que ninguno de los otros, porque pronto se conozen, luego se humillan, i así luego adquieren la grazia de Dios : antes, aconteze muchas vezes, que humillados por el pecado, caminan mas animosamente por el camino cristiano. Así muestra David haberle acaezido, diziendo : “ Bien para mí : que me humillaste, paraque “ aprenda tus justificaciones.” Esto os he yo querido dezír, paraque removais de vuestra conzienzia toda suerte de escrúpulos, los cuales todos ordinariamente nazen del amor proprio, i de poco conozimiento de Dios, estando zierta de que caminando por este camino cristiano, no pecareis, sinó por frajilidad. Os perdonará Dios luego, lo que así pecareis, por la

humildad, con la cual le pedireis perdón, i por la fé, i confianza que tendreis en / Jesu Cristo. f. 26.

JULIA. Con esto me habeis dado la vida enteramente, porque me teníais amedrentada.

VALDÉS. Amád, Señora, si quereis desterrar de vuestra alma todo el temór, porque no puede morar temór ninguno en aquella <sup>1</sup> persona, que con un vivo, i eficáz pensamiento pone los ojos de su alma en Cristo crucificado, considerando con entera fé, que Cristo satisfaze i paga por ella. Ahora concluyendo, digo, Señora, que estas reglas os llevarán al amor de Dios, i del prójimo, i os conservarán en el uno, i en el otro, i entonces por experienzia conozereis los frutos de la caridad, según que san Pablo los escribe diziendo, que “la caridad es paziente, conversable, no envidiosa, no insolente, no soberbia, i no busca sus cosas propias, no se aíra, no piensa en mal ninguno, no se alegra de la injustizia, pero gózase con la verdad:” i, que “todo lo sufre, todo lo cree, todo lo espera, i todo lo comporta.” <sup>2</sup> Conozereis tam-

Frutos  
de la  
caridad.

<sup>1</sup> En ital. [*nell' anima.*]

<sup>2</sup> Véase la páj. 242. en la Ediz. q̄. hize de la I. Ep. a los Corintios comentada por Valdés, i compárese.

bién, lo que dize san Juan, que la perfecta caridad echa fuera de la conzienzia todo el temór. Porque el que verdaderamente ama no teme.

JULIA. Ya estoi satisfecha en esto que toca a la caridad. A Dios plazca hazérmela gustár, i sentir en el alma, tán bien como, vos, me la habeis hecho penetrar en el entendimiento. Pero porque, a vezes, os he oido dezír, que la caridad es el fruto de la fé, querria, que me dijeseis alguna cosa en torno a la fé.

Caridad  
fruto de  
fé.

VALDÉS. Así es la verdad, como dezís, que yo os he dicho, que la caridad es el fruto de la fé: ¿i sabeis porqué os lo digo? porque estoi zierto, que donde hai viva fé, hai caridad. I sabéd, Señora, que así como el fuego no puede dejár de calentár, así la fé viva, no puede dejár de obrár obras de caridad; i os habeis de imaginár, que la fé, es como un arbol, i la caridad, es el fruto del arbol. I, así como el arbol, despues que está seco no dá fruto; así faltando la fé en los corazones de las personas, no hai caridad. I mirád, Señora,

Fé.



que cuando digo fé, no entiendo la fé, que solamente cree la historia de Cristo, porque ésta, puede bien estar, i está, sin caridad; i por eso la llama Santiago fé muerta, la cual tienen los malos cristianos, i tienen asimismo los demonios del infierno. Pero entendéd, que cuando digo fé, entiendo [hablar] de aquella fé, que vive en el alma, ganada no con industria, ni con artificio humano, sinó, mediante la grazia de Dios, con luz sobrenatural, la cual fé, dá crédito a todas las palabras de Dios, así a sus amenazas, como a sus promesas, de tal modo, que cuando oye dezír, que Cristo dijo, que el que creyere, i se bautizare, se salvará, i que el que no creyere, se condenará; dá tanto crédito a estas palabras, teniéndolas por certísimas; que no tiene duda ninguna de su salvación.

JULIA. En esto también nos convendremos, vos i yo; porque, en créer, ninguno me aventajará.

VALDÉS. No presumais de vos, Señora, que creeis, porque mui espirituál ha de ser *f.* 27. aquél, que tenga la fé tán viva, cuanto con-

viene para ser justificado por ella. Antes, conozéd, que sois debil en la fé, i dezíd a Cristo con los Apóstoles, “Señor, aumenta en mi la fé:” i dezíd con el padre del lunático, “Yo, Señor, tengo confianza en tí, mas todavía, tu, Señor, ayuda mi incredulidad:” i por esta vía ganareis mas, que por persuadiros, que creéis. Gran cosa es, Señora, conseguir de nuestros ánimos, que enteramente se confien en Dios: i lo vereis por esto: que si os preguntan, si creéis los artículos de la fé uno por uno, respondereis, que sí. Pero si inadvertidamente, viniendoos de confesar, os preguntaren, si creéis que Dios os ha perdonado vuestros pecados, direis, que pensais que sí, pero que no estais zierta. Ahora sabéd, que ésta inzertidumbre, naze de falta de fé, porque si vos enteramente os confiaseis en las palabras de Cristo, que dize a los Sacerdotes, que todo lo que ataren en tierra, será atado en el zielo, i todo lo que desataren en tierra, será desatado en el zielo; i si verdaderamente creyereis lo que confesais en el Credo, cuando dezís, que creéis la remisión de los pecados, no dudaríais de dezír a boca

Sacer-  
dotes.

\*[Lo dijo  
a los Apó-  
stoles.]

Remi-  
sión de  
pecados.

llena, sintiendo en vuestra alma dolor de la ofensa hecha a Dios, i habiendo confesádola, que teneis por zierto, que Dios os ha perdonado todos vuestros pecados. Confiar en Dios. ¿Quereis ver clara i manifestamente, cómo no os confiais enteramente en Dios? Dezídme: ¿con cual cosa estaríais mas sin cuidado, i mas descansada, i en cual cosa os confiaríais mas, para poderos zertificár de que, por este año, teneis bien con qué vivír; con una buena cantidad de dineros, que tuvieseis en un Banco; o en lo que Cristo promete a aquellos que buscaren el reino de Dios, cuando Él dize: No tengais cuidado, por lo que habeis de comer, ni por lo que habeis de vestír, pues que Dios tiene cuidado de vosotros: buscád antes el reino de Dios, i el mismo Dios os proveerá de todas estas cosas?

JULIA. No hai duda, sinó que tendré mas confianza en los dineros del Banco: mas si yo me conoziese tan perfecta, que mereziese, que Dios tuviese cuidado de mí, por ventura me confiaría mas en las palabras de Cristo.

VALDÉS. Antes, es al contrario, que cuánto mas perfecta fueseis, tanto menos mérito hal-

laríais en vos. I así es, que aquél que está mas zerca de la grázia de Dios, está mas lejos de pensár, que la mereze. I por esto dezía san Pablo, que por la grazia de Dios era, lo que era, no atribuyendo nada a sus méritos. De modo, Señora, que si confiais poco en las palabras de Cristo, no es por lo que dezís, sinó porque no las dais crédito: i esta es la mayor injuria que se puede hazér a Dios.

JULIA. Mucho me apretais: pronto me hareis créer, que no tengo fé.

VALDÉS. No quiero, que creais, que no la f. 28. teneis, pero quiero, que penseis, que la teneis muerta, i quiero, que rogueis mui ahincadamente a Dios, que os la vivifique, i os haga fuerte en ella, pues que, según san Pablo, sin fé, ninguno puede agradar a Dios: i si quereis mirár en ello, hallareis, que con ninguna cosa os puede un amigo vuestro ofender τόσο, quanto con no dar crédito a vuestras palabras: i por el contrario, que con ninguna cosa os puede hazér mayor servizio, i plazér, que con dar entera fé a todo quanto le dijéreis.

JULIA. En quanto a esto, vos dezís la verdad, que extremamente me duele, quando no

soi creida; i mucho me agrada, cuando me dán crédito.

VALDÉS. Puesto que conozeis esto de vos, debeis pensár siquiera lo mismo de Dios, i pensándolo, trabajareis por aprisionár, i subyugar vuestro entendimiento a la obediencia de la fé, i así aprendereis a confiaros en Dios, i a dar entera fé a sus palabras, tanto cuando amenaza, como cuando promete. I por no detenerme mucho en esto, digo, que si enteramente pusiésemos toda nuestra confianza en Cristo, dando entera fé a sus promesas, no dependeríamos, ni estaríamos tan ligados a las criaturas, en las cuales confiamos mas, que en Cristo, porque somos carnales, i no juzgamos de las cosas, sino tanto cuanto el sentido extrínseco, nos las representa, i así no tenemos cuenta con las intrínsecas. Bien podría dezír cosas maravillosas, si yo quisiese comenzár a loaros la fé: mas básteos saber esto: que tanto sereis cristiana, cuanto os supiereis confiar en Cristo, siendo así, que ser una persona cristiana, es ser justa, i no puede ninguna, ser justa, sinó por la fé, porque el justo vive por la fé.

F

Fé, i esperanza.

JULIA. Jamás he podido acabár de entender, qué diferenzia hai entre la fé i la esperanza, i holgaría me, saber de vos, en que manera las diferenziais.

Compañerazión.

VALDÉS. No me admiro de que no lo entendais, porque lo mismo acontece a muchas personas doctas. Ahora sabéd, que la fé se ejerzita en las cosas de la vida presente, i la esperanza en las de la vida eterna. Lo que habeis de entender de este modo. Vos que-  
reis, del Muelle, pasár a la isla de Capri, mas no sabeis cómo. Vengo yo a vos, i digo: “fíaos, Señora, de mí, que os pasaré a pié, por la mano, sin que os ahogueis en el camino, i pasada, os pondré en aquel paraje de la isla, en que deseais estar.” Vos, aunque os parezca cosa fuera de razón, dais crédito a mis palabras, i fiándoos de ellas, me tomais por la mano, i caminais por el agua. Veis aquí, que la fé os lleva, i juntamente os lleva la esperanza de gozar del contento que os han dicho que se halla en aquella Isla. ¿Entendeis ahora la diferenzia?

JULIA. Sí, i mui bien.

VALDÉS. Ahora, tornando a nuestro propósito, quiero Señora, que os pongais delante de los ojos de vuestra alma, la idea de la perfección cristiana, segun que aquí la hemos razonado, i que puesta, os enamoreis de ella, i enamorada, no os contenteis, hasta que llegueis mui zerca de ella, i pensád, que entonzes estareis zerca, quando conoziereis en verdad, que vuestro corazón no se inclina a amár cosa alguna, fuera de Dios, ni vuestra boca siente dulzura en nombrar otro nombre, que aquel de Dios, i este, solamente le nombra para gloria suya: I cuando sintiereis, que no os inclináis a obrár cosa ninguna, que no sea conforme a la voluntad de Dios, i cuando halláreis vuestro ánimo mui obediente, i sujeto a vuestros mayores, i mui ajeno de toda ira, de toda venganza, i de todo rencór, lleno de paz, i de humildád, i tan ajeno de todo vizio carnal, que en él no encontréis pensamiento, que no sea casto, i tan pobre de espíritu, que a ninguna cosa os inclináreis con vuestro deseo, más, que a conservár aquello, que él tiene, i tán ferviente en el amor del prójimo, que no solamente vos no hableis en perjuizio

Idéa de  
perfec-  
ción cris-  
tiana.

f. 29.

suyo, mas si oís, que otros hablan, quanto os es posible lo excusais, i disculpais;—en todo esto, quiero dezir, que quando os sintiéreis tan mortificada, así en los afectos, i apetitos, exteriores, como en los interiores, que ni la gloria del mundo os levanta, ni la deshonra os abate, i, que ni la ira se enseñoorea de vos, ni la envidia os molesta, ni menos os inquieta la carne;—podreis bien i verdaderamente créer, que estais zerca de la perfeczióu cristiana. Yo no digo, que penseis, que no estais en buen estado, quando no estais tan adelante, como he dicho, en la perfeczióu; pero digo, que hasta que sintais, i conozcais en vos esta perfeczióu, así como os la he pintado, no dejeis de rogár a Dios continuamente, que la aumente en vos, i aunque viniéseis a hazér milagros, i por otra parte, no os sintieseis mui fuerte, i firme, en esta perfeczióu cristiana, no querria, que pensaseis haber alcanzado cosa alguna. Esta es la perfeczióu, a la cual nos convida Cristo, quando dize; “que seamos perfectos, así como nuestro Padre zelestial es perfecto.” A la misma, nos convida san Pablo, diziéndonos, “que imitemos a Dios,



como hijos amorosos:"<sup>1</sup> i diziendo en otro lugar, "imitadme así, como yo imito a Cristo." I a la misma, os convido yo a vos, i a la misma deseo, que vos me convideis, con palabras i con obras.

JULIA. ¡O, Dios mio, que pagaría yo, por ver un cristiano tan perfecto, como aquí le habeis pintado! me parece que me desprendería de todo cuanto tengo.

VALDÉS. ¿I no sería mejor veros a vos, tan perfecta cristiana, cuanto aquí yo he pintado?

JULIA. Sí, pero eso es imposible.

VALDÉS. ¿Cómo imposible? ¿No sabeis, que dize Cristo, que todo es posible a aquél, que consigue de sí, poner toda su confianza en Dios?

JULIA. Bien lo he oido dezír, pero yo soi debil.

VALDÉS. I tambien, quanto mas debil seais, tanto será mayor la grazia de Dios, que os hará fuerte, con tal que confesáreis en verdad, que sois debil, i confieis en Cristo, que f. 30. os fortificará. ¿No sabeis, que dize el Evan-

<sup>1</sup> *αγαπητα.*

jelio, que lo que es imposible a los hombres, es posible a Dios?

JULIA. Deseolo tanto, que no oso esperar.

VALDÉS. Pues si lo deseais, pedidlo a Dios, i pedídselo, como dize Santiago, con confianza, que os lo dará, i yo os prometo, que no os faltará. ¡Gran cosa es ésta, que quieren las personas ser creidas en sus promesas, siendo naturalmente várias, i (como dize David) mentirosas; i que no quieran dar crédito, ni confiarse, en las promesas de Dios! Verdaderamente yo creo, que esta sea la mayor injuria, que las personas puedan hazer a la divina Majestád, así como también, el creer i confiár en sus promesas, es el sacrificio mas grato, que hazérse le puede.

JULIA. No cureis de deteneros mas en esto, sino comenzád a guiarme por el camino de esta perfeczióu cristiana, pues que ya me teneis tan enamorada de ella, que me parece, no poder vivir contenta, hasta que yo llegue, si no enteramente, a lo menos en tanta parte, cuanta me bastáre, a que mis cosas sean azep-tas a la vista de Dios. Pero se entiende, que

hayais siempre respeto a llevarme tan secretamente, que ninguna persona me sienta, porque, si lo puedo yo excusár, no quiero dar de qué hablár a las jentes.

VALDÉS. Yo haré lo que dezís: pero mirád, Señora, que nuevamente quiero, que me prometais de ayudaros, de aquello, que aquí os diré: porque no querría haber yo perdido el tiempo, i que, vos, os quedáseis en vos misma, como antes.

JULIA. Fiaos de mí, i yo os prometo, que antes de muchos días, con la grazia de Dios, vereis en mí el efecto de vuestras palabras.

VALDÉS. Con esta confianza recobraré ánimo, para descubriros, de este camino de perfeczióu cristiana, aquello que yo sé, i he podido entender. I antes que yo comienze a mostraros los pasos, por los cuales habeis de caminár, quiero que sepais esto: que san Pablo, en muchos lugares de sus epístolas divide al hombre en dos partes: la una llama carne, i la otra espíritu, la una viejo hombre, i la otra nuevo hombre: i sabéd, que por viejo hombre, entiende el hombre no vivificado por la grazia del Espíritu Santo, i que por nuevo

División  
del hom-  
bre.

hombre, entiende el hombre ya vivificado por la grazia del Espíritu Santo. El viejo hombre llama carne, i llámale cuerpo sujeto a pecados, donde parece, que bajo el nombre de carne, entiende todo el hombre, alma i cuerpo, sin Espíritu Santo, i la naturaleza sin la grazia. Esto mismo se demuestra, por aquello, que en otra parte dize, que la carne combate contra el espíritu, i el espíritu contra la carne, en el cual combate, si el alma se deja venzer de la carne, mezclándose con ella, se haze toda carnál, i si se deja persuadir de el espíritu, coadunándose con él, se haze todo espiritual. I por eso

- f. 31. san Pablo, casi siempre<sup>f</sup> divide el hombre en dos partes: i digo casi, porque en un lugar, o dos, parece que lo divide en tres, esto es, en espíritu, alma, i carne. Ya que habeis sabido, qué cosa es viejo hombre, carne, i cuerpo sujeto a pecados, i qué cosa es nuevo hombre, alma, i espíritu; i paraque entendais bien, cuál cosa de estas vive en vos, porque así mejor conozida la llaga, podreis aplicár las medizinas, sabéd, que segun el mismo san Pablo, los apetitos, i los afectos de la carne, son muerte, i son ene-

La carne,  
i sus fru-  
tos,

migos de Dios, porque ni quieren, ni pueden sujetarse a la lei de Dios. Sabéd mas, que los frutos de la carne exteriores, son homizidios, injurias, i pecados carnales; i que los interiores, son ambizi3n, avarizia, envidia, ira, venganza. Sabéd mas, qué segun el mismo san Pablo, los afectos del espíritu son vida i paz: quiere dezír, que mediante el espíritu, vive el alma, i la conzienzia está pazificada, i aquietada. Sabéd mas, que los frutos del espíritu son caridad, alegría, sinzeridad, paz, benignidad, bondád, fé, mansedumbre, i templanza. De manera, que un mismo hombre, segun la naturaleza es viejo hombre, i segun la grázia es nuevo hombre. El viejo hombre no alcanza las cosas que son del espíritu de Dios, antes, ziego con su razón humana, las tiene por vanas, i desvariadas. El nuevo hombre todas las cosas juzga, i él no puede ser juzgado por ninguno. De todo esto que he dicho, podeis, Señora, colejír, que vuestra alma está en uno de tres estados, o se ha mezclado con la carne, i hecho carnál; o se ha unido con el espíritu, i hecho espírituál; o está ahora en el combate de que la carne la

Afectos  
del espí-  
ritu.

Frutos  
del espí-  
ritu.

quiere para sí, i el espíritu la convida ázia sí. I conviene, que hagais este examen, porque si hallais vuestra alma con la carne, os encomendéis a Dios, i con estas reglas deis favór al espíritu, paraque comienze a combatir, i salga con la victoria: i si la hallais con el espíritu, con continua oración procureis conservarla así: i si la hallais no determinada, os hagais fuerza a vos misma, paraque presto presto se determine a abrazarse, i a unirse con el espíritu, paraque así se haga toda espiritual, i recobre aquella imájen i semejanza de Dios, a la cual fué criada. I pensád, Señora, que es imposible que no esteis en uno de estos tres estados: porque pensando esto, estoi zierto, que examinareis mui bien cuál es aquél, en que estais.

JULIA. Ya yo lo tengo bien examinado, i por lo que habeis dicho, lo he conozido mui claramente. Hazéd cuenta que yo estoi en el peor estado, i con este presupuesto conformareis vuestras palabras.

VALDÉS. Puesto que así es, encomendandoos con un afecto intrínseco a Dios, paraque ayude esta su obra, hazéd, que con todo el ánimo esteis mui atenta.

JULIA. Dejád a mí el cargo.

VALDÉS. El primér paso, que teneis que <sup>Paso</sup> dar en este camino, es conozér en verdád, que <sup>primero.</sup> hasta ahora habeis andado fuera de camino, aunque vos pensasteis que andábais por buen <sup>f. 32.</sup> camino. I porque estoi zierto, que habeis ampliamente conozido esto, por los sermones del Predicadór, no me cuidaré de entreteneros con mostraroslo.

JULIA. Hazeis bien, porque, aun cuando el predicadór no me lo hubiese mostrado, por lo que vos me habeis muchas vezes dicho, lo habria entendido.

VALDÉS. Está bien, i puesto que conozeis, que estais fuera de camino, el segundo paso <sup>Paso</sup> será, aplicár vuestra voluntád a querér cami- <sup>segundo.</sup> nár por este camino, que el predicadór os ha descubierto, i yo pienso mas particularmente mostraros. I asimismo pienso, zierto, que habeis andado ya por este paso, porque los sermones del predicadór, deben haber movido vuestra alma, i dispuéstola de manera, que conozeis aquello, que os importa, i por lo tanto deseais ya comenzár a caminar por el camino derecho.

quiere para sí, i el espíritu la convida ázia sí. I conviene, que hagais este examen, porque si hallais vuestra alma con la carne, os encomendeis a Dios, i con estas reglas deis favór al espíritu, paraque comienze a combatir, i salga con la victoria: i si la hallais con el espíritu, con continua oración procureis conservarla *así*: i si la hallais no determinada, os hagais fuerza a vos misma, paraque presto presto se determine a abrazarse, i a unirse con el espíritu, paraque así se haga toda espírituál, i recobre aquella imájen i semejanza de Dios, a la cual fué criada. I pensád, Señora, que es imposible que no esteis en uno de estos tres estados: porque pensando esto, estoi zierito, que examinareis mui bien cuál es aquél, en que estais.

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VALDÉS. El primér paso, que teneis que <sup>Paso</sup> dar en este camino, es conozér en verdád, que <sup>primero.</sup> hasta ahora habeis andado fuera de camino, aunque vos pensasteis que andábais por buen <sup>f. 32.</sup> camino. I porque estoí ziertó, que habeis ampliamente conozido esto, por los sermones del Predicadór, no me cuidaré de entreteneros con mostraroslo.

JULIA. Hazeis bien, porque, aun cuando el predicadór no me lo hubiese mostrado, por lo que vos me habeis muchas vezes dicho, lo habria entendido.

VALDÉS. Está bien, i puesto que conozeis, que estais fuera de camino, el segundo paso <sup>Paso</sup> será, aplicár vuestra voluntád a querér cami- <sup>segundo.</sup> nár por este camino, que el predicadór os ha descubierto, i yo pienso mas particularmente mostraros. I asimismo pienso, ziertó, que habeis andado ya por este paso, porque los sermones del predicadór, deben haber movido vuestra alma, i dispuéstola de manera, que conozeis aquello, que os importa, i por lo tanto deseais ya comenzár a caminár por el camino derecho.

JULIA. En cuanto a eso, yo os prometo, que lo deseo mas de lo que pensais.

Paso  
terzero.

VALDÉS. Tenéd, Señora, este deseo, por don de Dios. Ahora, porque no basta tener una cosa en la voluntad, si no nos determinamos a ponerla en efecto, el terzer paso es, que determineis, no solamente dejár el camino por el cuál os parecia, que caminábais ázia Cristo, sinó que tomeis éste, por el cual sin falta ninguna hallareis a Cristo. I pensád que cuando hubiéreis dado estos tres pasos, habrán hecho en vos su efecto aquellas palabras, con las cuales, primero san Juan Bautista, i después Cristo, comenzaron su predicación, diziendo, *Pœnitentiam agite, appropinquavit enim regnum cœlorum*, esto es, “Hazéd penitencia, porque se azerca el reino de los zielos:” como si hubiesen dicho, “Volvéd en vosotros, que vais perdidos, volvéd al buen camino, advertíd, que se azerca el reino de los zielos.”

JULIA. Luego que yo conozi, que el camino, que yo llevaba, no era bueno, deseé hallar el bueno, i propuse, entre mí, de caminar por él, si Dios me hazía la grázia, de que lo hallase.

VALDÉS. Porque por este camino no se

puede caminar sin el favór i grazia de Dios, i ésto no dá Dios sinó a los que dejan de pecár, i dejan de entender en cosas, que les pueden conduzir a pecado, i en cosas curiosas. El **Paso iiij.** cuarto paso es, que dispongais vuestro ánimo **Zelebrár el Sábado cristiano.** a zelebrár el sábado cristiano, quiero dezir, que dejeis de pecar : i no me contento con que no tengais pecado exterior, porque quiero, que comenzeis a dejár los interiores, porque sabeis que son los que os privan de la grazia de Dios ; i quiero, que dejeis de entender en cosas curiosas, i que diestramente aparteis de vos todas **Las cosas curiosas.** aquellas compañías, i conversaciones, que pueden alejár de Dios, i distraer vuestro ánimo, i de las cuales ninguna utilidad podeis conseguir, para el fin que os proponeis de vivír para Cristo, i no para el mundo. Bien desearía yo, que Dios moviese vuestro ánimo con aquel mismo ímpetu de espíritu, que *f. 33.* movió en Éfeso aquellos, que oída la predicación de san Pablo, se convirtieron a Cristo, i llevaron sus libros, en los cuales aprendían, i ejerzitaban, cosas curiosas, i en presenzia de todos los que allí se hallaron, los quemaron. Pero si no os encontráreis con este ímpetu de espíritu, me

Libros  
curiosos.

contentaré, con que, por ahora, dejeis estar estos libros curiosos en un rincón, porque os hago sabér, que son un estorbo mui grande, para el que comienza a caminar por este camino. I ya veis, que podeis echar fuera todos estos impedimentos sin notable demostración exterior.

JULIA. Veo bien, que me es util hazerlo así, mas no veo, que lo pueda hazér sin notable demostración.

VALDÉS. ¿ Como no ? ¿ No os basta el ánimo, para governaros tan prudentemente, que dejando estas cosas, parezca que no las dejais ?

JULIA. Seguíd mas adelante, que en esto, yo haré cuanto vos me aconsejáreis, que yo haga, porque en esto, me quiero mas gobernar con vuestra prudenzia, que con la mía.

Conozimiento  
del mundo.  
Paso  
quinto.

VALDÉS. Esto me basta. Ahora, porque no basta dejar el mal, si no os aplicais al bien, conviene, que de hoi adelante tomeis alguna parte del tiempo, que perdíais en estas cosas curiosas, para entrar profundamente en el conozimiento del mundo. I este será el quinto paso. Al mundo conozereis por falso, porque

en el no hai cosa, que no tenga mas de aparien-  
 zia, que de esenzia: por engañoso, porque  
 jamás cumple lo que promete: por vano, por-  
 que todo su fundamento es sobre cosas cadu-  
 cas, i transitórias: por enemigo de Dios, por-  
 que siempre procura de apartarnos del camino  
 de la verdad, i meternos en el de la mentira, i  
 falsedad: i por inconstante, porque jamás per-  
 severa en una misma opinión. I en fin, traéd  
 a vuestra memoria aquella bellísima tragedia,  
 que oisteis dezir al predicadór, con la cual  
 mostró, que las personas en este mundo, no  
 son mas, que representantes de una tragedia,  
 siendo así, que nuestro ser, no tiene mas fir-  
 meza, que el de ellos, ni se desemeja en otra  
 cosa, sinó en que el de los representantes, dura  
 algunas horas, i el nuestro, algunos años.  
 Por este conozimiento pasareis cada día, por-  
 que tánto, quanto mas conoziereis el mundo,  
 por esta via, tanto mas le aborrezereis, i esta  
 abominación será el sexto paso, quiero dezir,  
 que vuestra intenzión de conózér el mundo,  
 no sea para quedaros ahí, sinó para pasár por  
 ello, a aborrezér el mundo. Lo cual os ser-  
 virá, para perdér el gusto de las cosas del

El mun-  
do tra-  
gedia.

Paso vj.

Abor-  
rezér el  
mundo.

mundo, como son, honras, dignidades, estados, señoríos, i riquezas, cuyas cosas todas, con esta consideración, despreciareis, i tendreis en poco, deseosa de ganár a Cristo, i de vivir con Cristo, a ejemplo de san Pablo, que estimaba, que todas las cosas fuesen inmundizias, i suziedad, teniendo puesta toda su intenzión en ganár a Cristo. I así el mismo

f. 34. san Pablo nos ruega, que no nos<sup>r</sup> conformemos con el mundo, sinó que renovemos nuestros ánimos, a fin que podamos probár, i sabér, cual es la voluntad de Dios. Despues que habiendo conozido el mundo, le hubiereis aborrezido, o por mejor dezír, despues que hayais entrado un poco en el conozimiento del mundo, i en la abominación del mundo; tomareis otro poco de tiempo, para entrár en el conozimiento de vos misma, i esto será el séptimo paso. ¡O, Señora, cuánto importa el sabér conozerse las personas a sí mismas! Estoi zierto, de que si lo supiésemos, en verdad pondríamos mucho mayor estudio i dilijenzia en esto, que en cualquier otra cosa.

Conozimiento  
de si  
mismo.  
Paso vij.

JULIA. ¿En qué consiste esa importancia?

VALDÉS. En que, si no os conozeis, jamás

dejareis de amaros desordenadamente, i mientras os amáreis así, no podreis amár a Dios, i mientras no amáreis a Dios, no podreis hazér, dezír, ni pensár cosa, que sea en honór de Dios, i no siendo en honór de Dios, pensád si será en utilidad de vuestra alma.

JULIA. ¡Así conoziese yo a los otros, cuanto yo ampliamente me conozco!

VALDÉS. I también en esto está, Señora, el engaño, que no conoziendoos, pensais de conozeros. I hagoos sabér, que ha de ser persona mui espiritual, aquella, que enteramente haya de conozerse.

JULIA. Yo creo, que sea así, i pues que importa tanto este conozimiento, enseñadme, cómo haré para conozermé.

VALDÉS. La primera cosa, que debeis hazer, es persuadiros, que no os conozeis: La segunda, conóz en verdád la nezesidad, que teneis de conozeros: la tercera, rogar a Dios, que abra los ojos de vuestro entendimiento, a fin de que os podais conóz: i la cuarta, ocuparos un poco cada dia, en examinár vuestros afectos, i los apetitos, que os inclinan a desobedezér a Dios. Cuya inclinación

G

Examen  
de sí.

habeis de considerár que os viene por el pecado orijínal, i, por eso, la tendreis por la mas perniziosa, porque os es natúrál, i así os haze, que desenfrenadamente os ameís a vos misma, i querais todas las cosas, por vos. De aquí aprendereis a no confiar nada de vos, i así vivireis siempre sobre vos. Después de esto, discurriréis, un poco, por vuestra vida pasada, i hallareis muchos defectos, los cuales os llevarán a conózér quién soís vos: conozereis, como conozía David, mucha iniquidad interior, i mucha rebeldía contra Dios: conozereis, con lo mismo, que todo hombre es falso, i mentiroso, quiero dezír, que tiene mala opinión de las cosas de Dios: conozereis, con Jeremías, que el corazón humano es perverso: i conozereis, [por] que dize Dios, que los sentimientos, i los pensamientos del corazón humano, son siempre malos. Hallareis en vos misma la mucha ingratitud, que habeis usado contra Dios. Ésta conozereis, cada vez que examináreis, por una parte, los beneficios que habeis rezibido de la mano de Dios, así los jenerales, de que gozan todas las personas del mundo, como los particulares, de que vos sola



gozais; i espezialmente, <sup>f. 35.</sup> el beneficio de la pasión de Cristo, i el haberos traído a cono-  
 zimiento de ella, a fin de que gozeis, i os  
 ayudeis con ella: i por otra parte, vuestras  
 obras, en todas las cuales habeis mostrado  
 grande ingratitud: en las malas, por haber  
 ofendido a Dios, que os dió el ser que teneis,  
 i os rescató con su preziosa sangre; i en  
 aquellas, que os parecen a vos buenas, porque  
 entendereis, como las hazíais, no por amor de  
 Dios, sinó por amor de vos misma, pues que  
 habeis vivido, no en amor de Dios, sinó en  
 amor de vos: i por ser el vizio de la ingratitud  
 tánto mas abominable, i vil en vos, quanto  
 que habeis rezibido, quizá, mas dones de Dios,  
 así en el cuerpo, como en el alma, que ninguna  
 otra persona, que haya hoi en el mundo;  
 pensád, si tendreis causa de estar mal con  
 vos, i de sospechar de vos todo mal, i así  
 vivir siempre mui rezelosa de vos misma.  
 En este conozimiento de vuestra poquedad,  
 e ingratitud, conviene que entreis cada día,  
 no para deteneros ahí, sinó para pasar <sup>Paso viij.</sup>  
 al octavo paso, que será el aborrezeros a <sup>Aborre-</sup>  
 vos misma. A esto llegareis fazilmente, <sup>zerse á sí</sup>  
 mismo,

Amór  
propio.

porque quanto mas os conoziéreis, tanto mas os aborrezereis, i mas sospechareis de vos todo mal : i, si bien enteramente no os aborrezereis, al menos perdereis el amór que [os] teneis a vos misma, siendo así, que la cosa que en sí es mala, quanto mas i mejór se conoze, tanto mas se aborrece. No digo, que os aborrezcais, para maltratar vuestra persona, sinó para despojár vuestro corazón del amór propio, el cual es el impedimento mayór, que tenemos, para la grazia. Siendo así, que ningun enemigo tenemos tan mortal, como éste, porque él es, el que por todas las vías i modos, que le son posibles, trabaja por separarnos de Dios : antes, nos tiene tan ziegos, i tan trasportados, que apenas nos acordamos de Dios : i por eso dize el Profeta Miqueas, que los enemigos del hombre, son sus familiares. Por tanto, Señora, si quereis caminár fazilmente, por este camino cristiano, trabajád (entrando con frecuencia en el conozimiento de vuestra propia miseria, i debilidad) por desterrár de vos, este mortal enemigo del amór propio : i sabéd de zierto, que desterrado este, os hazeis capáz, para que luego, al punto, venga el Espíritu Santo a

morár en vos. I paraque, segun fuéreis desnudando vuestro corazón del amor propio, le vayáis vistiendo del amor de Dios, conviene, Señora, que luego luego paseis al nono paso. Paso ix. Este es: que conforme habeis tomado un poco del día, para entrar en el conozimiento de vos misma, por venir, con él, a desamoraros de vos propia; así, sin tardár mucho, tomeis de él, otro poco, para entrár en el conozimiento de Dios, para venir, por él, a enamoraros de Dios. A esto vendreis fazilmente, siendo así, que la cosa, que en sí es buena, cuanto mas se conoce, tanto mas se ama. I, paraque de mejór gana entreis en este conozimiento, sabéd, que dize f. 36. Cristo, que la vida eterna, consiste en conózér a Dios, i a su Hijo Jesu Cristo: i que el Sabio dize, que conózér a Dios, es perfecta justizia, i que saber la justizia, i la virtud de Dios, es raiz i fundamento de inmortalidad.

JULIA. Hazéd cuenta, que así como no he sabido conozermé a mí propia, mucho menos sé conózér a Dios, i enseñadme, cómo he de conozerlo.

VALDÉS. Tres vías hai, por las cuales, las personas han llegado, i llegan, al conozimiento

de Dios: la una es, por luz natural, esta tuvieron los Filósofos jentiles, i tienen hoy las jentes que no conozen a Cristo. De este conozimiento habla san Pablo, cuando dize, que, por las cosas visibles, vienen las personas, a conozimiento de las cosas invisibles de Dios. I es así, que considerando las personas ésta fábrica mundana, en la cual veen tantas cosas exzelentes, van indagando, e imaginando, aquellas, que no veen, i por unas i por otras, vienen a conozér, que Dios, el cual las hizo, es omnipotente, i pasando mas adelante, a la consideración de la admirable providenzia con que gobierna i rije todas las cosas, de tal manera, que las unas no impiden a las otras, antes, unas ayudan i sirven a otras; vienen a conozer, que Dios es sumamente sábio, i la misma sabiduría. Ademas de esto, pasando a la consideración de la igualdad, con la cual, sin diferenzia, todos estos bienes zelestiales, i terrenales, son repartidos a las personas del mundo, conozen en Dios suma bondád. De manera, que solo con la luz natural, las personas del mundo, leyendo en el Libro de las cosas criadas, han conozido, i conozen en Dios

omnipotenzia, sabiduría, i bondád. La otra vía de conózér a Dios, es, por la Sagrada Escritura, quiero dezír, por el Testamento Viejo Testamento Viejo. el cual daba [dá ?] un conozimiento de Dios, pero imperfecto, mostrándolo airado, cruel, i vengativo: i por eso le llama, Dios de la venganza, i Dios de los ejérsitos<sup>1</sup>, i así otros nombres de rigurosidad. De este modo conózían a Dios los ziegos Hebreos, pero todavía es un conozimiento menos oscuro, que el que tenían los Jentiles, pues aunque sirviesen como esclavos, como quiera que sea, al cabo servían. La terzér vía de conozer a Dios, es, por Cristo. Conozér a Dios por Cristo. Esta vía es la zierta, la clara, i la segura, i este es el camino llano, real, i señoril. I sabéd, Señora, que en conozer a Dios, por Cristo, consiste todo el ser del cristiano, porque para conozer a Dios por Cristo, es nezesario conózér, antes, a Cristo. I porque no podemos conozer a Cristo, por luz

<sup>1</sup> Esta es añeja equivocazió, o perversión. *Deus Sabaoth*, q. dezír, propriamente, *Dios de las huestes, o ejérsitos zelestes, o zelestiales*: que son; los astros, sol, luna, estrellas, planetas, i tambien ánjeles, i meteoros, &c. &c. Todo ese ejérsito de marabillas, criado por Dios.

natural, ni por otra industria humana, si Dios interiormente no alumbrá, i abre los ojos de nuestra alma; digo, que este conozimiento de Dios, por Cristo, es sobrenatural, para el cual, es menester grazia espeziál de Dios. I que sea verdad, que no podemos tener verdadero conozimiento de Dios, sinó por Cristo; lo demuestra el mismo Cristo, diciendo, que ninguno puede venir a Él, si su <sup>s</sup>Padre eterno no lo lleváre: i lo demuestra tambien, por lo que respondió a san Pedro, quando le confesó por verdadero hijo de Dios, diziéndole. Bienaventurado, tu, Simón, hijo de Juan, porque no alcanzaste esto por razon humana, ni por luz natural, sino porque así te lo ha revelado mi Padre, que está en los zielos. Cuando conozemos a Dios por Cristo, lo conocemos amoroso, benigno, misericordioso, i piadoso, porque en Cristo hallamos amór, benignidad, misericordia, i piedad. Véd aquí, Señora, tres vías para conozer a Dios, segun tres diferencias de jeneraciones de jente, que han tenido, i tienen conozimiento de Dios. I porque las dos primeras no son a vuestro propósito, las dejareis estár, i solamente os ejerzita-

reis en la tercera, que es, conózér a Dios por-Cristo. Mas, paraque el ejerzizio os sea provechoso, conviene, que conozcais a Cristo, no con conozimiento adquirido por costumbre, ni Conózér a Cristo. ganado por ingenio e industria humana, sinó por lumbre de fé inspirado por el Espíritu Santo. De esta manera es menester, que conozcais a Cristo, si quereis venír, por Cristo, a conózér perfectamente a Dios.

JULIA. No sé lo que yo os responda, me parece, con todo, que conozco bien a Cristo, salvo, si no hai otro conozimiento secreto, que yo no alcanzo.

VALDÉS. Ahora bien, este conozimiento secreto es el que yo digo, al cual llegan las personas por inspiración. I porque no pensemos, que baste el conozimiento público de Cristo, que tiene un asesino, i un traidór, nos desengaña san Juan diziendo, que, el que dize, que conoze a Dios, i no observa sus mandamientos, es mentiroso.

JULIA. Me parece, que me apretais mucho, i tanto mas lo siento, cuanto que no tengo que replicaros. Ahora bien, no perdamos tiempo; por vída vuestra, que me abrais un poco el

camino, por el cual yo pueda entrár en el verdadero conozimiento de Cristo.

VALDÉS. Yo os daré, Señora, algunos principios, mediante los cuales, encomendándoos a Dios, el mismo Dios os revelará el resto. I así digo, que el verdadero conozimiento de Cristo, (pues que ya creéis, que es verdadero Dios, i verdadero hombre, i, como Dios, igual a su eterno Padre, i una cosa misma con Él,) consiste, Señora, en saber i considerár, a qué vino el hijo de Dios al mundo, hecho hombre; porqué padezió; i porqué resuzitó.

JULIA. Estas tres cosas quiero yo aprender de vos, de la manera, que vos las considerais.

Porqué  
Cristo  
encarnó.

VALDÉS. Podeis, Señora, considerár, que Cristo vino al mundo, a satisfazér por el pecado orijinál, porque habiendo sido la culpa infinita, respecto a Dios, que fué ofendido; convenía, que la satisfacció fuese infinita, i ésta, no la podía efectuar sinó el mismo Dios, que es infinito. I por eso, el Hijo de Dios, hecho hombre, satisfizo por el pecado del primér hombre, i juntamente por todos los pecados de todas las personas que fueron, eran, son,



i serán: i a los que dejaren de gozar de esta *f. 38.* satisfacció, les faltará por su culpa. Cristo vino a habilitár a los hombres, paraqué puedan ser hijos de Dios: vino a mostrarnos el camino del zielo: vino a confundír la soberbia de la carne, i a predicár la humildád del espíritu: vino a destruir la muerte: vino a quebrantár las fuerzas del Demonio: vino a darnos, i comunicarnos su espíritu, con el cual pudiésemos hazer la voluntad de Dios,— porque, con la Lei, solamente nos había Dios declarado su voluntad, mas la Lei no nos daba fuerzas, con las cuales pudiésemos cumplirla:— vino a mostrarnos el amor que su eterno Padre tiene al jénero humano, cuyo amor perfectísimamente se vee i conoze en Cristo: i, en fin, vino a abrirnos las puertas del Paraíso, i a habilitarnos paraque pudiésemos entrár en él. Ahora, considerando estas causas, por las cuales vino Cristo, pensád, vos, si podremos adquirir por otros, que por el hijo de Dios, hecho hombre, tántos, i tán singulares beneficios. Además de esto, quando querais considerár porqué padezió, os lo enseñará el mismo Cristo, diziendo: *cum exaltatus fuero a*

Porqué  
padezió  
Xpo.

*terra, omnia*<sup>1</sup> *traham ad me ipsum*: esto es, “cuando yo seré levantado de la tierra, traeré toda<sup>1</sup> cosa a mí mismo.” Como si dijese: Para desarraigár las personas del amor de las cosas de este mundo, i enamorarlas de las cosas de la vida eterna, es menester, que Yo sea puesto en una cruz: i diciendo, en otro lugar, que convenía, que Él fuese puesto en la cruz, paraque todos los que en Él creyesen, se salvarsen. I sabéd, de zierto, que no hai lugar ninguno, donde mejor podais conozér a Dios, que en Cristo crucificado. I os sé dezír mas, que si la contemplación de Cristo crucificado, no os desenamora de las cosas del mundo, i os enamora de las cosas de Dios, siempre estareis miserablemente ligada a las criaturas, tanto, que una de las cosas, porque yo pienso, que san Pablo llama a Cristo, medianero, entre Dios i los hombres, es porque no podemos conozér, créer, ni amár a Dios, sinó mediante

<sup>1</sup> En el orijinal ital., *copiando a la Vulgata*, se pone *omnia*, en vez de *omnes*: i luego se traduze bien, *toda cosa*, o, *ogni cosa*. El *omnes*, o *todos*, i. e. *Judios i Jentiles*, es lo que dize el orijinal Griego en los mejores MSS. Pero, aun traduziendo con la Vulgata *omnia*, el sentido será el mismo.

la contemplación de Cristo crucificado, el cual, padeziendo, hizo dulce el padezér; i sufriendo, hizo fazil el sufrir; i siendo injuriado, hizo dulces las injurias; i muriendo, hizo sabroso el morir. ¿No os parece, que fueron éstas, causas mui bastantes para que Cristo padeziese? ¿No os parece, que en ellas, nos ha mostrado Cristo tanto amor, cuanto basta, para que nosotros nos desamoremos de nosotros mismos, i nos enamoremos de Dios? Mas considerando mas adelante, hallareis, que Cristo resuzitó, para que nosotros resuzitásemos con Él, así en espíritu en esta vida, como en carne en la vida eterna: I la resurrección espiritual aconteze, quando por medio de la mortificación del viejo hombre, viene a ser vivificado el nuevo hombre. I esto es, pasár de la muerte a la vida: i así como Cristo, por la muerte, vino a la resurrección; así nosotros, por la mortificación, venimos a la vivificación. I esto es lo que Cristo dijo a Nicodemo: que el que no fuere rejenerado por agua, i por Espíritu Santo, no puede entrar en el Reino de Dios. Considerareis tambien en Cristo, que subió a los zielos, para levantar nuestros

Porqué  
resuzitó  
Xpo.

f. 39.

Porqué  
mandó al  
Espíritu  
S<sup>to</sup>.

ElCredo.

ánimos a la contemplación de las cosas zeles-  
tiales. A la cual nos convida san Pablo  
diziendo: Si habeis, hermanos, resuzitado  
espiritualmente con Cristo, levantád vuestros  
ánimos a las cosas altas, donde Cristo está  
sentado a la diestra de su eterno Padre: in-  
vestigád las cosas altas, no las que están  
sobre la tierra. I finalmente, considerareis,  
que mandó Cristo el Espíritu Santo, paraque  
nos enseñase la verdad de las cosas, paraque  
desterrase de nosotros todo amor de cosas  
corporales, paraque nos inflamase en el amor  
de las cosas espirituales, i paraque, mediante  
él, recuperásemos, i restaurásemos en noso-  
tros, aquella imagen de Dios, a cuya semejanza  
fuimos criados. Por estas consideraciones,  
podreis, Señora, venir poco a poco, (ayudan-  
doos Dios, i favoreziéndoos con su grazia), al  
perfecto conozimiento de Cristo, i por Cristo,  
al verdadero conozimiento de Dios. I así os  
ireis enamorando de Dios, i enamorando de  
Cristo. I de la misma manera, ireis verifi-  
cando, dentro de vos, aquellas verdades, que  
confesais en el Credo. De modo, que lo que  
ahora confesais, por obediencia, sojuzgando

vuestro entendimiento, entonzes, lo confesareis, con alguna experienzia. De este modo, que así como conjunto el primér conozimiento de Dios, que es por luz natural, cual le hubieron los jentiles, con el conozimiento, que se tiene por la Escritura del Testamento Viejo, el cual tuvieron los Hebreos; puede uno, con verdád, dezír, que cree en un Dios Padre omnipotente, criadór del zielo i de la tierra; así, antes mucho mejór, despues que hayais conozido a Cristo, i, por Cristo, conozido a Dios, i, por Dios, volviendo a conózér a Cristo, podreis, i por dezirlo mejór, direis con verdád, sintiendo en el alma lo que dezís, lo mismo que el otro ha dicho i confesado: i pasando mas adelante, direis con verdád, que creéis en Jesu Cristo, hijo de Dios, un solo Señor nuestro. Esto creereis así, porque el amor i la obediencia, con que conozeis, que Cristo se mostró obedientísimo á la voluntád de Dios, i todas las otras divinas perfecziones, que conozereis en Cristo, os zertificarán, que Cristo es hijo de Dios: i la dulzura, i caridád, que considerareis en Cristo, os constreñirá a tenerle por solo absoluto Señor vuestro. I pasando

Conze-  
bido de  
Espíritu  
Santo.

mas adelante en la verdad, creereis, que Él fue conzebido por obra del Espíritu Santo : porque la admirable perfeczió, que conozereis en Cristo, os asegurará, de que su jenerazió, o conzepzió, no fué cosa ordinaria, sinó obra verdaderamente del Espíritu Santo. I con

f. 40. esta seguridad, entrando mas profundamente en el conozimiento de Cristo, confesareis pura-

Nazido  
de María  
virjen.

mente, que nazió del vientre de la virjen María : porque entendereis, que tanta perfeczió como conozereis en Cristo, no podia nazér, sinó de madre perfectísima ; i por eso convenía, que fuese virjen, antes del parto, i en el parto, i despues del parto. Despues de esto, cuando sintiéreis dentro de vuestra alma, que contra toda razón natural, os es dulce el padezér, os es sabroso el penár, i os es gloriosa la cruz ; conoziendo en verdad, que la gloria, en la confusió, i la honra [en] el vituperio, no se hallarían, si Cristo no hubiese ennoblezido así lo uno, como lo otro ; con viva fé con-

Padezió.

fesareis, que Cristo padezió, siendo Presidente Ponzio Pilato. I cuando hubiereis cruzificado i sepultado con Cristo, vuestro hombre viejo, con todas sus afiziones, i sus apetitos,

no tendreis duda alguna en creér, i confesár, que Cristo fué crucificado, muerto, i sepultado. Tras esto, quando os veais libre, en alguna manera, del peso de vuestros apetitos, i afiziones, considerando, que así como Cristo os ha libertado de aquel infierno, así tambien libró a los Santos Padres del Limbo ; creereis, con verdád, que Cristo deszendió al infierno. I, quando pasando mas adelante, sintiéreis la vivificación del hombre nuevo, i por ella viéreis, que habeis resuzitado con Cristo ; sereis forzada a confesár, que el mismo Cristo, al terzero día, resuzitó de la muerte. I quando llegáreis a sentir, que todos vuestros deseos van enderezados al espíritu, todos caminan ázia el zielo, conozereis, que ya Cristo está en el zielo, sentado a la diestra de Dios Padre, i así lo confesareis. Luego, inflamado vuestro ánimo con deseo de que el mundo vea a Cristo glorioso, pues que ya le vió pasible, teniendo por zierto que ha de ser así, confesareis, que Cristo ha de venir a juzgár a los vivos i a los muertos. I porque el Espíritu Santo, que mora en vos, os abrirá los ojos, paraque conozcais en muchas otras personas, el mismo

Sepultado.

Libró el Limbo.

Resuzitó.

Subió al zielo.

Juizio futuro.

H

espíritu, conforme a lo que dize David: “ *Qui timent te, videbunt me, et lætabuntur* :” esto es, “ Los que te temen, me verán, i se alegrarán;” con todo el corazón, a boca llena, confesareis

El Espí-  
ritu  
Santo.

al Espíritu Santo. Con este mismo cono-  
zimiento, creereis tambien en la santa Iglesia  
católica, i en la comunión espiritual de las  
santas personas, que hai en ella. Siendo así,

La Igle-  
sia cató-  
lica.

que conozereis de verdad, que Cristo tiene  
aquí, en el mundo, una Iglesia universál, santa,  
por la partizipación de la santidad de Cristo,  
la cual Iglesia, abraza, i contiene, buenos i  
malos ; i que tiene una unión espiritual de  
personas santas, mantenidas por la grazia del  
Espíritu Santo, las cuales, viven en fé, espe-  
ranza, i caridad : i conoziendo vos, que ha-  
biendo confesado vuestros pecados a un Sa-

f. 41. /zerdote de esta Iglesia universál, i habiéndoos  
absuelto él, i habiendo, vos, dado crédito a la  
absolución, que, de parte de Dios, os dió, sentís  
vuestro ánimo pazificado, i aquietado ; con-  
fesareis en verdad, que en esta Iglesia uni-  
versál, hai remisión de pecados. Además de  
esto, cuando por experienzia interiór, hubiéreis  
sentido la verdad de todo lo restante, que un

Remi-  
sión de  
pecados.



fiel cristiano debe creér ; no dudareis en confesár la resurrección de los cuerpos. Lo que os será tanto mas fazil de confesár, cuanto que habreis confesado la resurrección de Cristo, i en vuestra alma comenzado a sentir el provecho de ella. Finalmente, cuando sintiéreis, i gustáreis, lo que de la dulzura i amor de Cristo, aquí, en esta vida, se siente, i se gusta, teniendo ese tal gusto, i sentimiento, por señal de lo que habeis de gustar, i sentir en la otra vida, adonde, zierto, esperareis ír a gozár perpetuamente con Cristo ; no dudareis de confesár la vida eterna : i entonzes, cuando tengais dentro de vos, una tal experienzia ; vuestra fé será viva, i verdadera, porque tendreis, dentro de vos, la experienzia de ella. Ahora, mirád bien, i considerád, Señora, el fruto que sacareis de conozér a Dios, por Cristo : i considerando, que tánto sereis cristiana, cuanto tuviéreis vivo, en vuestra alma, este conozimiento de Dios, por Cristo ; estoi zierto, que, de buena gana, os olvidareis, alguntanto, de vos misma, entrando en este divino conozimiento : en el cual debeis entrar, muchas veces al dia, si quereis caminár por este

La resurrección de los cuerpos.

La vida eterna.

camino cristiano. Antes, quiero, Señora, que lo hagais así, porque quiero, que ya comenzeis á caminár, i que no se os deslize el tiempo en deseos, pues, entretanto, yo no sabría deziros mas de lo dicho en torno a este conozimiento de Cristo. Espero bien en la bondád de Dios, que conforme comenzáreis a entrár en él, hallareis tantas cosas, de las cuales yo aquí no he sabido hazér menzión, que cuanto, ahora, me teneis por largo en hablar, tanto, entonces, me tendreis por corto en dezir.

JULIA. Antes, me alegraba tanto de oiros, que el mayor desplazér, que me habeis hecho, ha sido el pasár tan brevemente por cosas tan altas, i tan importantes. Mas os digo, que por no interrumpiros, he dejado de preguntaros algunas cosas, que se me ofrezían, que se me han ido ya de la memoria: pero, no importa, seguíd adelante.

VALDÉS. No sé qué mas deziros sobre esto, sinó que quiero, que os sirva lo ya dicho, mas para dar en el hito, de entrár en el conozimiento de Dios, i de Cristo, que para adivinár: porque el adivinár ha de ser por espezial

don i grázia de Dios, la cual vos siempre le habeis de pedír afectuosisimamente, i quando así se la pidiéreis, os prometo, que no os la negará. Grazia de Dios.

JULIA. ¡Gran cosa es la fuerza, que tiene la palabra de Dios! Dígolo, porque os zertifico, que no hai razón ninguna, de cuantas os oigo, que de nuevo no me acrezienten la voluntad, que tengo, de *f. 42.* caminár por este camino cristiano.

VALDÉS. Todas esas nuevas voluntades habeis, Señora, de abrazár, i reconozér las de la mano de Dios. I sabéd, que mis palabras no podrían bastár a esto, si allá, dentro, no os estuviese solizitando el Espíritu Santo. Ahora, porque en ninguna cosa, podemos las personas conozer, ni entender enteramente, el amor, que Dios nos tiene, su misericordia, su piedád, i su benignidád, si no en Cristo; — por eso digo, Señora, que la vía mas zierta, i el camino mas señoríl para llegar a conozer a Dios, es, el conozerlo por Cristo. I así dize el mismo Cristo, que Él es el camino, la verdád, i la vida: i así, el Padre eterno, nos conduze a conozér a Cristo, i Cristo nos trae a conozér al Padre eterno; i a Cristo no podemos venír,

\* H 3

sinó por Dios<sup>1</sup>; i la vida eterna consiste, en conózér a Dios; i en conózér a Cristo. Porque así dize el mismo Cristo, hablando con su Padre eterno. “Esta es la vida eterna, que las personas te conozcan a tí, verdadero Dios, i a Jesu Cristo, al que enviaste al mundo.”

JULIA. Ruego a Dios, que me dé grazia, de que le conozca en verdád, así como Él quiere ser conozido.

Paso x. VALDÉS. Tenéd, Señora, buena confianza en Dios, que zierito, le conozereis; i cónoziéndole, procurareis enamoraros de él, sirviendóos de este conozimiento, para este efecto. I este será el dézimo paso, con el cual quiero, que ejerzitándoos en el conozimiento de Dios, i en el conozimiento de Cristo, os enamoreis de Dios, i os enamoreis de Cristo; quiero dezír que comenzeis a enamoraros de Dios, i a enamoraros de Cristo. De cuyo amor, porque ya, en lo pasado, os he dicho bastante, remitiéndome a ello, no quiero entreteneros con deziros particularmente alguna cosa, de la nezesidad que tenemos de él, como de los maravillosos efectos, que haze en el alma, donde

<sup>1</sup> En el Italiano, *Christo*.

está vivo i ferviente: i cómo, segun san Juan, Dios es caridad, i el que vive en caridad, vive en Dios, i Dios vive en él; que es, zierto, otra dignidad, i otra felicidad, que vivir en el mundo, i que el mundo viva en nosotros. Digo, pues, que quiero pasar por todo esto, i venir a dezir, i zertificaros, que, mediante el conozimiento de vos misma, tánto perdereis del amor propio de vos misma, cuánto, mediante el conozimiento de Dios, ganáreis del amor de Dios. I esto es, salir de vos, i entrár en Dios.

Salir de  
sí: i en-  
trár en  
Dios.

JULIA. Por eso dizen, que tanto vale el que no entiende, como el que no vee. Había oido yo dezir mil vezes eso, de salir una persona de sí, i entrár en Dios; mas nunca lo había acabado de entender, del todo, hasta ahora.

VALDÉS. Tanto mas estais obligada a amár a Dios, pues que os ha conservado en este mundo, hasta tanto, que habeis venido a conocer, lo que hasta aquí no habíais conozido.

JULIA. Teneis razón. Quiera Dios, que sepa aprovecharme de ello.

VALDÉS. En tanto suzederá eso, en cuanto

vos pudiereis forzá<sup>r</sup> vuestra voluntá<sup>d</sup>, a confiaros enteramente en Dios. I porque, quanto  
*f. 43.* mas firme está la fé<sup>s</sup> en nuestras almas, tanto mas ferviente está la caridá<sup>d</sup>; i quanto mas ferviente está la caridá<sup>d</sup>, tanto mas firme está la fé<sup>s</sup>; quiero, Señora, que, de ordinario repaseis en vuestra memoria, las cosas, que la Iglesia manda, que creais.

JULIA. Luego, solo para eso, será menestér todo el dia.

El Credo. VALDÉS. Yo entiendo solamente del Credo, el cual quiero, que cada día repaseis en vuestra memoria, no con dezirlo, por costumbre, con la boca, mas con entenderlo senzillisimamente, i considerarlo con el ánimo: i este será el un-

Paso xi. dézimo paso. I, porque como habeis visto, por lo que antes os dije, en la fé hai creenzia, i confianza, en el creér las cosas que están por venír, os confirmareis por la considerazió<sup>n</sup> de las cosas pasadas: quiero dezir, que así como la esperanza del efecto, que conozeis, que ha hecho la predicazió<sup>n</sup> del evangelio de Cristo en las personas, os haze zierta, de que, por lo pasado, Dios ha sido verídico, así también os confirmareis en creér, que lo mismo será, en

lo que está por cumplirse, como es la resurrección de los muertos, el juicio final, la vida eterna, la condenación de los malos, i la salvación de los buenos. En la confianza así mismo os confirmareis, i fortificareis, reduciendo a vuestra memoria, algunas promesas, que ha hecho Dios, i cumplídlas, así como la de enviár a Cristo, para redención del jénero humano, lo que había prometido a los Patriarcas, i a los Profetas; i así como la promesa de la sucesión de Abraham. I, viniendo al Testamento Nuevo, os acordareis, que prometió Cristo, que resuzitaría, i resuzitó: prometió, que enviaría el Espíritu Santo, i le envió: prometió, que no faltaría la fé en la Iglesia cristiana, i no ha faltado: prometió, que estaría con los cristianos hasta el fin del mundo, i hasta ahora ha estado, está, i estará: prometió, que cuando viniese el Espíritu Santo, a los Apóstoles, les enseñaría toda la verdad, i así lo cumplió. Ahora, hallando vos, Señora, que Él ha cumplido todas estas promesas, fazil cosa os será dar crédito a cuantas cosas os dijere. I así, cuando sintiéreis que os dize, que no tengais ansiedad, por proveeros de las

La fé, i  
la Igle-  
sia, no  
faltarán.

cosas de este mundo, sinó, que antes, busqueis el Reinado de Dios, i su justizia, i que Él os proveerá de todas estas cosas; lo creereis, i os confiareis en Él. I de la misma manera, quando sintiéreis dezir, que Cristo promete darnos todo lo que, por confianza de su bondad i liberalidad, le pidiéremos; tendreis por zierto, que os dará lo que pidiéreis: i, si no os lo diere, creereis, que sea por vuestra incredulidad: i de esta manera, os confirmareis, i fortificareis en la fé, en cuanto es confianza. I porque, así como entrando en el conozimiento de Dios, i de Cristo, os enamorareis de Dios, i de Cristo, i pondreis toda vuestra confianza en las promesas de Dios, por Cristo; así también, enamorada de Dios, i de Cristo,

f. 44. i confiandoos 7 de Dios, i de Cristo, conviene,

Paso xii. que por estos medios, paseis un paso mas adelante. Este será, confirmaros en la esperanza de la vida eterna, a la cual esperareis llegar, para gozár perpetuamente de Dios, i de Cristo: i este será el duodézimo paso de este camino cristiano. En esta considerazió, procurareis disponer vuestro ánimo de tal manera, que tenga una viva esperanza de gozár de Dios en

Espe-  
ranza.



la gloria, tán firme i zierta, que de ella no tenga duda alguna. I sabéd de ziertó, que tánto tendreis de esperanza, cuanto tuviéreis de fé, i tánto tendreis de fé, cuanto tuviéreis de caridád: i, asímismo, tánto tendreis de caridád, cuánto de fé, i tánto de fé, cuánto de esperanza: porque estas tres virtudes cristianas van siempre tan hermanadas, que la una, no está nunca sin la otra: digo, cuando esa una se halla perfectamente, i vive perfectamente en el alma.—¿Os contentan estos doze pasos, que os he mostrado?

Tres virtudes cristianas.

JULIA. Podeis pensar, si me contentan: el caso fuera, que estuviese yo libre de estos fastidios, i trabajos, en los cuales estoi, como bien sabeis: los que me tienen tan enajenada de mí, que si en otro tiempo me hubieseis visto, ahora no me conozeríais.

VALDÉS. Confiaos, Señora, en Cristo, i proponeos llegar por este camino a él, i creedme, que Él os ayudará mui ámpliamente, a quitar todos estos vuestros fastidios, i trabajos: antes, con tan buena compañía, no hai cosa en esta vida, que sea fastidiosa, ni trabajosa, si no es ver, que las personas del mundo

ofendan a Dios, i contradigan i desprecien su lei, i su doctrina.

JULIA. Todo eso creo yo ampliamente, mas ¿cómo se haría, paraque yo me recordase de todo lo que, sobre esto, habeis dicho?

VALDÉS. Si no os recordáreis de todo, bastará, a lo menos, que os recordeis de parte. I quiero desengañaros en esto, que, yo no os doi estas reglas, paraque esteis atada a ellas: porque mi intenzion es, que no os sirvais de ellas, sinó como de un ALFABETO CRISTIANO, por medio del cual podais llegar a la perfeczion cristiana. I, de todas las cosas dichas, me contento, que os recordeis: que el paso primero, es, que conozcais, que el camino, por el cual, hasta ahora, habeis caminado, no os podía conducir a Cristo. El segundo, que tengais voluntad de caminar por éste, que sin falta os conducirá a Cristo. El tercero, que os determineis a comenzár a caminar por él. El cuarto, que dejeis las costumbres, i conversaciones profanas, i que os pueden separár de Dios, i que desecheis todas las cosas curiosas. El quinto, que cada día tomeis un poco de tiempo para entrár en el conozimiento del

Epílogo  
de los  
pasos.

mundo. El sexto, que mediante este cono-  
zimiento, trabajéis por despreziár, i aborrezér  
el mundo. El séptimo, que tomeis cada día  
un poco de tiempo, para entrár en el conozi-  
miento de vos misma. El octavo, que medi-  
ante este conozimiento, trabajéis por librár<sup>f. 45.</sup>  
vuestro corazón del amor propio de vos mis-  
ma. El nono, que tomeis otro poco de tiempo,  
para entrár en el conozimiento de Dios, i que  
entreis por el conozimiento de Cristo. El  
dézimo, que, mediante este conozimiento, os  
enamoreis de Dios, por medio de Cristo, ena-  
morandoos, asímismo, de Cristo. El undézi-  
mo, que así por las historias del Testamento  
viejo, como por las del nuevo, confirmeis en  
vuestra alma la fé, en cuanto haze a la creen-  
zia, i en cuanto haze a la confianza. El duo-  
dézimo, que igualmente confirmeis, i fortifi-  
queis en vuestra alma la esperanza de la vida  
eterna. I porque quiero, que camineis por  
este camino, como Señora, i no como sierva,  
como libre, i no como esclava, con amor, i no  
con temór; advertíd, que no quiero, que to-  
meis superstiziosamente estos ratos de tiempo,  
que yo digo, para estas consideraciones, dedi-

El tiem-  
po i el  
lugar.

Padre-  
nuestros  
sin pen-  
sár.

cando, para ellos, mas una hora, que otra, o una parte de vuestra casa, mas que otra; porque quiero, que los tomeis, con libertad de ánimo, en la hora, que mas os agradáre, i en la parte de vuestra casa, que mas os acomodáre, i cuando no os venga bien otro tiempo, me contentaré, con que tomeis aquél, cuando estais despierta en la cama, o me contentaré con aquél, cuando andais paseando por casa, diziendo Padrenuestros, sin entender, ni considerár, lo que dezís, por tener la intenzión ocupada en las cosas del mundo, i, a veces, en hazer castillos en el aire, que todos estos son tiempos perdidos.' I ya veis, que todo cuanto hasta aquí os he dicho, lo podreis hazér, sin que persona del mundo os sienta, ni entienda. I así tambien veis, que todo esto es de calidad, que nadie os lo *puede* impedir, ni disturbár, sinó solo vuestra malizia, vuestro olvido, i el descuido de Dios.

JULIA. Bien lo veo: es fuerte cosa, para una persona, haber de parar su atenzión, en tantas cosas.

VALDÉS. Es fuerte, al prinzipio, por la repugnanzia que se tiene, por parte del viejo

hombre, pero luego se haze fazil, segun éste va muriendo. Tanto mas, que no sé, porqué habeis de tener por fuerte, la consideración ordinaria de ocho cosas, de las cuales, si bien las cuatro son desabridas, las otras cuatro son tán amorosas, i tán sabrosas, que asáz bastan para hazer dulces i sabrosas todas las otras, tanto más, que estas consideraciones, no os impiden mas que los tiempos perdidos.

JULIA. Dios me dé su grazia, porque yo voi viendo, que es bien nezesario.

VALDÉS. Sí dará, mientras que conoziéreis en verdad, que la habeis menestér, i con ese conozimiento, se la pidiéreis: i sabéd, que aun este conozimiento, os viene por grazia espeziál de Dios. Ahora, quiero que traigais a vuestra memoria, lo que poco ha os dije de la división, que haze san Pablo, del hombre, partiéndole en hombre viejo, i en hombre nuevo; no sé, si os acordais bien, de lo que en torno a esto os dije.

JULIA. Acuérdome mui bien.

VALDÉS. Puesque os acordais, sin volverlo a repetir, digo, Señora, que por el ejerzizio f. 46. mentál, del cual hemos hablado en los doze

Mortifi-  
cár el  
viejo  
hombre.

pasos, habeis de comenzár vuestro camino cristiano: i digo, que le habeis de continuar, por otro ejerzizio, que tambien quiero, que sea mental, a fin de que salgais con vuestra intenzión, de adquirir a Cristo, sin perder el mundo. Esto es, que esteis con cuidado continuo, i vijilancia, para mortificár en vos, el viejo hombre, i vivificár el nuevo. I quiero, que sepais, que así como conoziéndoos a vos misma, os desamorareis de vos, i conoziendo a Dios, os enamorareis de Dios; i así como cuanto quitaís del amor propio de vos misma, tanto añadís del amor de Dios; así, ni mas, ni menos, cuanto mortificais del hombre viejo, tanto vivificais del hombre nuevo.

JULIA. Es menestér, que vos me digais, cómo he de hazér esa mortificazió, i vivificazió.

Negár  
nuestra  
volun-  
tád.

VALDÉS. Ya os digo, que haziendo la mortificazió, hazeis igualmente la vivificazió: i hareis la mortificazió por la negazió de la voluntád, quiero dezír, negando, i contras- tando vuestra voluntád en todas las cosas, así en las pequeñas como en las grandes. I sabéd, zierto, que sin esta negazió de la volun-

tád, de ningun modo podemos ir a Cristo. Porque estando nuestra voluntád naturalmente inclinada a amarse, i a querer todo lo contrario, de lo que Cristo quiere; pensád, si será nezesario venzerla, i negarla, para seguir a Cristo. I, por eso, dize el mismo Cristo, “el que quiera venir en pos de mí, niéguese a sí mismo:” quiere dezír, niegue su voluntád, i tome sobre las espaldas, la cruz de sus trabajos, i penas, i sígame. Esto mismo tenía san Pablo, cuando nos aconseja, que no hagamos todo lo que queramos, quiere dezír, que neguemos a nuestras voluntades. I que se ofenda Dios, con que tengamos enteras nuestras voluntades, pareze bien, por lo que dize, por Isaías, hablando del ayuno, donde una de El ayuno. las cosas que reprehende, por las cuales dize, que nuestro ayuno no es bueno, es, porque en el día que ayunamos, tenemos enteras nuestras voluntades. I esto es, porque mientras que nuestras voluntades están enteras, el viejo hombre está vivo, i estando el viejo hombre vivo, la carne, con sus apetitos i afectos, vive i reina en nosotros. I asímismo el amor propio, con el cual somos hechos ídolos de so-

berbia, i de arroganzia. De manera, Señora, que, de todos modos, conviene que os ejerzi-teis en esta negazión de vuestra propia voluntad.

JULIA. Fuerte paso me parece éste.

VALDÉS. Fuerte sería, para un ánimo bajo, plebeyo, i servíl; mas para ùn ánimo alto, jeneroso, i valeroso, como es el que Dios os ha dado; no es, zierito, nada fuerte: antes, si bien lo considerais, es mas fuerte cosa tenér tan libre i suelta vuestra voluntad, que ella os lleve, como con la traílla, a todo cuanto la viene en gana: porque esta es cruel e in-  
f. 47. comfortable<sup>f</sup> servidumbre ¿No os parece, que yo tenga razón?

JULIA. Si así pudiese yo hazér lo que me dezís, como conozco, que en todo esto, teneis gran razón; os prometo, que no habría persona en el mundo, que me pusiese el pié delante en este camino cristiano: pero . . .

VALDÉS. No digais eso, Señora, por vida vuestra: mas cobrad ánimo, cobradlo, i no desmayeis: i pensád, que el peso de todo esto, no le habeis de llevar vos, sinó Cristo por vos; porque el amor, os hará la cosa fazil i lijera.



JULIA. Ahora bien, pues que se ha de hazér, no gastemos palabras. Dezídme cómo he de hazér, para negár mi voluntad.

VALDÉS. Cuanto a lo primero, conviene, Señora, que tengais esto por averiguado, que vuestro enemigo doméstico es vuestra voluntad, la cual siempre os convida a cosas, que os aparten de Dios. I, porque muchas vezes cubre tales cosas con capa de virtud i santidad, determinaos, Señora, de hoi en adelante, a no hazér, dezír, ni pensár cosa alguna, de cuantas vuestra voluntad os ofrezce, sin examinarlas antes mui bien, representándolas al entendimiento, paraque él lo compruebe todo con la regla de la lei de Dios. I porque todas las cosas, o son buenas en sí, o son malas en sí, o son indiferentes; estád, Señora, sobre aviso: i cuando la voluntad os convidare a hazér, dezír, o pensár alguna cosa, examinádla antes, como digo, con la regla de la lei de Dios, i si halláreis, que esa tal cosa es mala en sí, apartadla de vuestra fantasía, i mandád a vuestra voluntad, que no os la traiga delante, á ejemplo de Cristo, que diziéndole el Demonio, que le adorase, le respondió con la lei de Dios:

Nuestra  
voluntád.

Examen.

“*Dominum Deum tuum adorabis:*” esto es: “Adorarás al Señor Dios tuyo.” Como si dijese: No te quiero adorar, porque la lei de Dios manda, que no adore sinó a Él. I si hallareis, que es buena en sí, ponédla luego por obra, sin perdér la ocasión. I si lo que se os ofreze, hallareis que es indiferente, pensád un poco en ello, i hallando, que de aquella cosa os puede venir mas mal, que bien, dejadla estár: i hallando, que os puede venir mas bien, que mal, tomadla: pero mirád bien, que no os engañeis. Porque muchas vezes el Demonio se transforma en Anjel de luz: i muchas vezes nos mueve la carne, i pensamos, que es el espíritu. I si la tal cosa fuere de calidád, que en ella no pueda haber ni mal, ni bien, mas que una satisfaczió de vuestra voluntad; el dejarla, o tomarla, importa poco: bien es verdád, que será mejór dejarla, porque cuanto mas contrariais vuestra voluntad, tanto mas la mortificais. Pero mirád, Señora, que digo, que yo quiero, que hagais este examen continuamente, i que no os movais jamás a hazér, dezír, ni pensár una cosa, sin hazer antes estas consideraciones, que os he dicho.

JULIA. Yo me esforzaré a ello, lo mejor que pudiere. Mas querría, para entender mejor esto, que me lo declaraseis mas, poniendolo en práctica.

VALDÉS. La declaración verdadera será, que comenzeis a ocuparos *f* en este ejerzizio; i *f*. 48. con él, aprendereis mas, en una semana, que, sin él, aprenderíais en diez años.

JULIA. Todavía, ayudará mucho, que me digais algunas particularidades.

VALDÉS. Digo, Señora, que porque nuestra voluntad, siempre se mueve a querer una cosa, por uno de los zinco sentidos corporales, conviene, que tengais mucho recato en ellos, no dejándoles desordenarse en cosa alguna, de tal manera, que *ni* por los ojos, ni por el oído, ni por el gusto, ni por el olfato, ni por el tacto, pueda entrár a la voluntad cosa alguna, que la pueda alterár, ni perturbár. Este recato es necesario tener, hasta tanto, que los sentidos estén tan mortificados a las cosas del mundo, que ningún deleite hallen en ellas: i aun entonzes, es preziso, que no nos descuidemos, porque con nuestro descuido, pudieran volvér a revivír. I sabéd, Señora, que tánto, cuanto mortifi-

Mortifi-  
cár los  
zinco  
sentidos.

ficáreis vuestros sentidos exteriores, tanto vivificareis los interiores. I será, ziertó, así, que cuanto menos os deleitáreis en mirar las cosas corporales; tanto mas os alegrareis en mirár con viva fé, i cordiál amor las cosas espirituales. I cuanto menos os alegráreis de oír las cosas profanas, i vanas; tanto mas os ocupareis en oír, i escuchár exteriormente la palabra de Dios, e interiormente las divinas inspiraciones, i así oireis la voz de Dios, quando interiormente hablare con vuestra alma. I cuanto menos os deleitareis con los manjares exteriores, tanto mas os desvelareis interiormente, i avivareis, por gustar las cosas interiores, que son pastos del alma. I cuanto menos os agradaren, i contentaren los olores corporales, tánto mas i mejor vuestra alma olerá las cosas divinas, i espirituales, i dirá a Cristo, como buena esposa: “*Currimus*<sup>1</sup> *in odorem unguentorum tuorum*,” esto es, “Corremos al olór de tus unguentos.” I cuanto menos vuestro cuerpo se gozare en tocar cosas que le sean agradables, i deleitables; tanto

<sup>1</sup> En la Vulgata—*curremus* : *corrерemos*.

mas vuestra alma se afizionará a clavarse de pies i manos con Cristo en la cruz. Por tanto, conviene, Señora, que continuamente esteis sobre aviso, para la mortificación de estos sentidos exteriores, pues que conozeis, que por ella, vivificais los interiores. Junta-  
 mente mortificareis en vos, poco a poco, el Mortifi-  
cación de  
afectos. respeto del mundo, porque en tanto estimareis mas a Dios, en cuantouviéreis en menos al mundo. Mortificareis todo afecto de ira, i todo afecto de venganza. Esto hareis, ejerzitandoos en la pazienza, i en el sufrimiento, en la humildád, i en el desprezio del mundo. I, porque quiero, que estas virtudes cristianas, vivan siempre en vuestra alma; quiero, que de tantos en tantos dias, examineis, i tomeis cuenta a vuestra alma, para saber, como está bien fundada en ellas. Esto hareis, considerando vivamente, i en verdad, cómo rezibiríais con pazienza una adversidad, que os aconteziese; cómo sufriríais una injuria, o *f.* 49. molestia, que os fuese hecha; cómo toleraríais, que una persona baja i plebeya os prezediese; cómo pasaríais por la confusión del mundo, cuando las personas de él, os despreziasen, i

tuviessen en poco. I junto quiero, que os examineis, cómo estais de firme en la fé; cómo estais de zierta en la esperanza; cómo estais de ardiente en la caridad. Esto hareis tomándoos cuenta, cómo os confiais en las promesas de Dios, en las cosas corporales: porque de aquí podreis juzgár, cuánto os confiais en las cosas eternas. Porque, en verdad, el que no se resuelve a confiarse en Dios, que le proveerá de las cosas, que pertenezzen al cuerpo, sin solizitud suya; no sé yo cómo se resolverá a confiarse en Dios, que le dará las cosas, que pertenezzen al alma, i, cómo esperais, de gozar de Dios en la vida eterna. I examinando todas vuestras obras, si van enderezadas a vuestra utilidad corporál, o espiritual, o derechamente a la honra de Dios, i al bien de vuestro prójimo, conozeis, qué tanto estais adelante en la caridad. Quiero mas, que hecho este examen, si no halláreis vuestros afectos, i sentidos, tán mortificados, que verdaderamente estas virtudes viven i reinan en vos; con cordial afizion pongais los ojos de vuestra alma en Cristo cruzificado, i con el corazón le digais, estas, u otras semejantes

palabras. “ O, Cristo Señor mio, favorézeme  
 “ con tu grázia, de tal manera, que, por tu vir-  
 “ túd, venziendo estos mis afectos, i mortifi-  
 “ cando estos mis sentidos, vivifique, i plante  
 “ en mi alma estas virtudes cristianas, de  
 “ suerte, que siempre tú, Señor mio, vivas en  
 “ mí, i yo viva en tí.”

Orazión  
a Xpo.

JULIA. ¡Cómo me habeis dado la vida con esto! No habeis dicho aquí cosa mejor. Pero querría saber de vos, cómo conozere yo, que he hecho, esta mortificazi3n, o vivificazi3n.

VALDÉS. Ya os he dicho, que ésta es una cosa, que se comienza en el bautismo, i dura por toda la vida del hombre : porque, mientras vive, halla siempre qué mortificár en sí. Porque estos afectos i apetitos, que en nosotros, por el pecado orijinál son desenfrenados, siempre retoñan, i tornan a brotár. Por tanto, os digo, que no os descuideis jamás, creyendo haber hecho esta mortificazi3n ; hasta que conozcais, que estais tan ajena de ira i de venganza, que por ninguna cosa, que las personas del mundo os hizieren, os con-moveríais : i tán ajena de querer, i desear cosa de cuantas tienen i poseen vuestros prójimos,

Mortifi-  
cazi3n.

que antes os contentaríais, que os tomasen de lo vuestro, que tener ilizitamente de lo déllos : i tán casta, i pura, que en vos, no reine jamás pensamiento deshonesto : i tán ajena de hablár en perjuizio de vuestros prójimos, que esteis siempre aparejada, para excusarlos, i defenderlos. Cuando tengais todas estas cosas, pensád, que habeis mortificado el hombre

f. 50. viejo : i <sup>s</sup> cuando conoziéreis el corazón vuestro, tán lleno de amor de Dios, que ninguna cosa ama, fuera de Dios, i si alguna de ellas ama, la ama por Dios; i cuando sintiéreis, que en vuestra boca no hai cosa mas dulce, ni mas sabrosa, que el nombre de Dios; i cuando viéreis en verdád que vuestra vida es un continuo Sábado cristiano; entonzes podreis pensar, i creér, que habeis perfectamente vivificado al hombre nuevo, i no antes.

JULIA. Mucha perfeczió es esta, en la cual me quereis poner.

VALDÉS. Aun quando yo quisiese ponerlos en esta perfeczió, no os habría de parezér mucho, porque, pues que Dios os ha dado tanta perfeczió en el cuerpo, i en el ánimo, segun el mundo, no sería mucho, que vos os



dispusiéseis, paraque Él os diese también la perfeczi3n del espíritu, según Dios. Cuanto mas, que yo no quiero ponerlos, así de una vez, en ella; mas muéstroosla, i convidoos a ella, i os ruego, que vayais caminando por ella, a vuestra comodidad, de tal manera, que ni la priesa os fastidie, ni el descuido, os haga volver atrás.

JULIA. Con esto me dais la vida, aunque, para deziros la verdad, me aprieta mucho, el haber de dejár algunas conversaciones, con las que, a veces, tomo un poco de gusto; i algunas cosas curiosas, con las cuales paso mi tiempo: porque temo, que si yo 'dejo estas cosas, caeré en algun humor melancólico, que me hará vivir en continuo desabrimiento. Conversaciones.

[VALDÉS.] Menos quiero ser tan rigoroso, que os exija, que las dejeis todas, así de una vez. Bueno sería, que las dejáseis, pero, si os es mui molesto, las podreis dejar poco a poco: mas, con tal condizi3n, que no os quedeis con ellas. I creedme, Señora, que conforme vayais tomando gusto i sab3r en las cosas de Dios, ireis teniendo por amargas i desabridas las cosas en que ahora encontrais plazér i deleite..

JULIA. En fin, yo bien veo, que os andais acomodando a mi debilidad, paraque no me desespere.

VALDÉS. ¿Parézeos, que haga yo mal ?

JULIA. Antes, me parece, que esto, es lo mejor que hazeis.

Los afectos. VALDÉS. Por esto os parece bien : porque os quereis bien. Mas dejemos estar eso : quiero, Señora, daros todavía mas lizenzia, porque la dificultád, que se os representará en este camino, no os haga volvér atrás. Esta es, que si no pudiéreis tan enteramente mortificar vuestros afectos, i apetitos de tal manera, que seais absolutamente Señora de ellos ; a lo menos, los regleis, i modereis de suerte, que ellos no sean Señores de vos. Los Estóicos soñaron, con no sé qué prezeptos, reduzir a una persona a tal [situación], que de ningun modo pudiese ser perturbada, ni molestada por sus afectos : pero a esto no pudieron jamás llegar. El buen cristiano no ha de buscar, ni procurar, carezér de afectos, porque nunca lo conseguirá, ni es bien que lo consiga : mas debe buscár el ser Señor de sus afectos, de tal manera, que sus perturbaziones, i sus moles-

tias, de ningun modo le puedan apartár de f. 51. Dios. Esto digo, considerando, que el Apostol san Pablo, sintiendo estas perturbaziones, i estas molestias, dezia: "*Infelix ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis hujus?*" esto es: "¡Miserable hombre de mi! ¿quién me librárá del cuerpo de esta muerte?" Esto decía él, sintiéndose molestado, i perturbado por sus afectos, i por eso deseaba estar libre de la prisión del cuerpo, aunque era tan señor de sus afectos, i tan superiór a ellos, que si bien lo solizitaban, nunca lo prezipitaban. El imperfecto cristiano siente mas estas perturbaziones, i estas molestias, porque está mas lejos de la mortificazió del viejo hombre. I así, aunque no es señor de sus afectos, todavía, no dejándose señoreár de ellos; cayendo, i levantándose, i otras vezes tropezando, i no cayendo, camina a Cristo: i con tal que tenga siempre su intenzió enderezada a Cristo, fazilmente le perdona Dios sus tropiezos, i sus caídas. Los que no sienten estas molestias, ni estas perturbaziones, son, los que de tal modo se han dejado señoreár de sus afectos, que sin contradiczió alguna desenfrenadamente

UnCristo  
en memo-  
ria.

corren en pos de ellos. A estos tales, no los quiero yo poner en el número de cristianos, para no hazer esta injuria al evangelio de Jesu Cristo. Ahora, porque la guerra contra los afectos es dificultosa, i mucho mas contra los interiores, contra los que teneis vos que combatir, quiero, Señora, que totalmente pongais en vuestra memoria al Cristo crucificado, el cual traigais siempre, i en todo lugar, delante de vos, por testigo de todas vuestras obras, palabras, i pensamientos, i por escudo con que repararos contra los asaltos, que os darán vuestros afectos, i apetitos: i estoi zierto, que de este modo, no hareis, ni direis, ni pensareis, cosa, que sea contra la lei de Dios, porque tendreis verguenza de ser vista de Cristo, que traeis con vos. I aunque, al prinzipio, no le podais traer tan continuamente, con el tiempo estoi zierto, de que lo podreis hazer mui fazilmente: antes, os digo, que os será mui agradable, i sabrosa, este tal compañía.

JULIA. Yo así lo creo, i así espero en Dios, que me lo conzederá.

VALDÉS. Tambien quiero, Señora, de vos esto: que ninguna noche os durmais, sin exa-

minár antes, en qué obras, en qué palabras, Examen  
de noche.  
i en qué pensamientos habeis gastado aquél  
día, comenzando de la mañana, i continuando  
hasta la noche: i examinando, así las cosas  
pequeñas, como las grandes, porque, quén se  
deja venzér en las cosas pequeñas, mejór se  
dejará venzér en las grandes. I quiero, que  
por el tiempo mal gastado, i mal *empleado*, os  
reprehendais a vos misma, de todo corazón,  
conoziedo, en verdad, haber sido causa de  
esto, vuestra mala inclinazió, i proponiendo,  
de tener, al otro día, mas cuidado, i mas  
vijilanzia sobre vos: i quiero, que por el bien  
gastado, deis /grazias a Dios, conociendo ver- *f. 52.*  
daderamente, que lo que hai de bueno en  
vos, es don de Dios, i lo que hai de malo, es  
de vuestro caudál. I cuando fuese posible  
hazer este examen, con una persona espiritual,  
el fruto sería, sin duda, mucho mayór: pero  
me contento con que lo hagais sola con vos.  
I porque todavía, a las buenas óbras muchas  
vezes nos movemos, no puramente por Cristo,  
sinó por algunos designios, i contentamientos  
de nuestra sensualidad, de tal manera, que no  
nos lleva á ellas el amor de Dios, sino el

Amór-  
propio.

amór-propio; quiero, Señora, que aun de las que os parezieren buenas obras, sospecheis, i que con esta sospecha, las examineis mui bien, porque, si fuese posible, querría, que a todas ellas\* os moviéseis, pura i sinzeraamente por amór de Dios: i creédme, que está tán internado este malvado del amór-propio, que en todas las cosas quiere su parte. I por eso no querría, que os contentáseis con cortarle; sinó deseo, que tán de raíz le arranqueis de vuestro corazón, que de ningun modo vuelva a crezér. Quiero mas: que siempre que habláreis con alguna persona espirituál, la comuniquéis, i deis parte de todas las cosas, que os pasaren por la fantasía, i de todos vuestros pensamientos: porque, si la persona es tál, os sabrá dezír sobre cada cosa, táles palabras, que, vos, quedareis mui satisfecha, i mui contenta. I quiero también, que a todas las personas espirituales, que conversaren con vos, les deis lizenzia, de que, sin vos pedírselo, os digan lo que sintieren i conozieren de vos, en vuestras palabras, i vuestras obras. Antes, quiero que no solamente les deis lizenzia para esto, sinó que les rogueis, i les encargueis mucho, que

así lo hagan. I sabéd de zierto, que de esto sentireis un marabilloso fruto espirituál. Ultimamente, quiero, Señora, que de tantos en tantos días, refresqueis en vuestra memoria la imájen, e idea de la perfeczión cristiana, de la manera, que aquí la hemos pintado, i que poniéndola, de una parte, i poniendo, de la otra, lo que en este camino cristiano hubiéreis ganado, considereis bien, cuan de zerca, o cuan de lejos, os hallais de aquella imájen de perfeczión, i hallandoos lejos, quiero, que con un ímpetu amoroso, i con una eficáz confianza, os volvais a Cristo crucificado, i le digais con el corazón: “ ¡ Ah, Cristo Jesus, Dios i Señor Orazión. “ mio! Inspira, inspira, Señor mio, en mi alma el viento del Espíritu Santo, tán eficazmente, que con marabilloso ímpetu la lleve “ sin pararse, hasta que enteramente se halle “ toda trasformada en esta perfeczión cristiana, que tengo delante de mis ojos.” Este es, Señora, el Libro, en el cual deseo, que vos Leczión. continuamente leais, porque en él, aprendereis mas en un día, que en todos cuantos hai en el mundo, podríais aprender en zien años. Antes, digo, que todo lo bueno, / que está f. 53.

\*K

escrito, en tánto se gusta, i entiende, en cuanto el ánimo de aquél que lee, está dispuesto de este modo: tánto, que aun la sagrada Escritura, es veneno, para el ánimo, que no tiene esta humilde disposizi3n, la cual deseo, que vos tengais, antes quiero, que totalmente la tengais, pues que me habeis prometido, que si yo os pongo en un camino secreto, por el cual vayais a Dios, sin ser vista del mundo; caminareis por él. I si el que yo os he mostrado, no es de esta calidád, soi contento, que no me cumplais vuestra palabra.

JULIA. Antes, me parece tán secreto, que en él no hallo otra dificultád mayór, que el secreto: no porque no me parezca mui bueno, ni porque yo tenga otra voluntád, de la que tenía, antes de caminá3r por él, sinó porque es tán recóndito, que como no le hallo el modo, ni le veo con los ojos del cuerpo, no sé si azertaré a caminá3r por él.

VALDÉS. Si no hallais el modo, es porque todavía no habeis comenzado a caminá3r por él. Comenzád, i vereis, si le hallais el modo. I si no lo veis con los ojos del cuerpo, abrid los ojos del alma, i lo vereis. I sabéd de



zierto, que, de tener zerrados éstos, prozeden todos los males, i pecados, en que las personas caen en esta presente vida: i no penseis, que no azertaríais a caminar por él, porque lo azertareis, con tal que confieis en Cristo, i desconfieis de vos misma: porque por ahí habeis de entrár, i por ahí habeis de continuár vuestro camino. I porque, entre las otras cosas, que en él se os ofrezarán, para impedirlos, i disturbároslo; la honra, i el respeto del mundo, sin comparazón alguna, impiden mas, que todas las otras (i así creo, zierto, que lleva muchas mas almas al infierno, que otro cualquier afecto humano), quiero, Señora, que os persuadaís, de que vuestra deshonra, i vuestra honra, dependen de vos sola, de tál manera, que solamente vuestras malas obras, os pueden deshonorár, i solamente vuestras buenas obras, os pueden honorár. I, de este modo, no poniendo vuestro honor en manos, ni a merzéd de las personas del mundo, no tendreis ocasión, ni de esperar de ellos la honra, ni de temér de ellos la deshonra, i con esto conversareis, i tratareis con ellos con mucha libertád, i [tendreis] mucho dominio

Honra  
del mun-  
do.

Satisfac-  
ción de  
cosas ex-  
teriores.

f. 54.

Riquezas.

interiór. Esta es una cosa, que diziéndola, parece mui fazil, i os prometo, que es tán difizil, que [es] feliz, el que se pone a hazerla, i felizísimo, el que sale con ella. I porque, despues de este respeto del mundo, la cosa que mas impide a las personas, que quieren caminár por este camino cristiano, es la falsa persuasión, que nos hemos formado, creyendo, que en las cosas exteriores, podemos hallár satisfaczión, i contento; quiero, Señora, que contra esta falsa persuasión, vayais armada, con una zierta, firme, i verdadera opinión. Esta es, que zertifiqueis a vuestro ánimo, de que en ninguna cosa, de las que no podeis alcanzár por vos misma, sin tercera persona; ni menos, de / las que las personas del mundo os pueden dár, o quitár; podrá jamás hallár entero contento, o felicidad, alcanzándolas, ni descontento, o infelizidád, perdiéndolas. I será así, que como no esperareis hallár satisfaczión, ni felicidad en riquezas, ni en estados, ni en las otras cosas, que el mundo, i las personas del mundo, dán, i quitan; ni, por infelizidád, ser privada de aquello, con que os hallais; no solamente no deseareis lo que no teneis, sinó

que poseereis de tál modo lo que teneis, que cuando os fuese quitado, no pensaríais haber perdido nada. Esta misma consideración podeis extendér, a los padres, a los amigos, i aun a vuestra propia persona, porque estando en este presupuesto, ni deseareis la sanidad del cuerpo, ni temereis la enfermedad, ni deseareis la vida, ni temereis la muerte, puesto que ni lo uno está en vuestra mano conservár, ni lo otro podeis huir. No digo, que os hagais tan insensible, que no sintais estos afectos, mas digo, que de tal modo los mortifiqueis, que aunque vuestro ánimo se resienta, no se altere, ni se perturbe.

JULIA. Esto me parece mas dificultoso todavía, que lo otro.

VALDÉS. Ahora, sabéd, Señora, que esta consideración, i la otra, las he aprendido yo de un Filósofo jentil, el cual, para estas cosas tan difiziles, como [vos dezís], no buscaba, sinó no se qué tranquilidad de ánimo. Ahora, pensád, vos, si han de ser dificultosas a un ánimo cristiano, que las toma para caminár mas desembarazado a Cristo, i para salir de sí

mas presto, i mas de raíz, para entrár en Cristo. I, por tanto, os suplico, Señora, que antes que os pongais a ejerzitaros en ellas, no las tengais por difíziles.

JULIA. Gran cosa es, tener la persona, que despojarse de estos afectos naturales, los cuales apenas se conozen.

Ambi-  
zión.

VALDÉS. Yo os diré, qué es tan grande, que sintiendo David la dificultád, que hai, no solamente en despojarse de ellos, sinó en entenderlos, i conozerlos, ruega a Dios, que le limpie de sus cosas ocultas, i secretas, que son estos afectos, i añade luego: “I haz, que tu siervo no sea vencido de la ambizión.” Consideraba el Santo Profeta, que entre los afectos interiores i secretos, la ambizión, así como es mas naturál al hombre, así es mas dañosa, i es mas secreta. I por eso tan espezialmente pide a Dios ayuda para venzerla.

JULIA. Con razón. I así os digo con verdad, que la cosa, que mas temór me dá, cuando pienso en caminárl por este camino, que me enseñais, es, que habiendo siempre oído dezír, que Dios castiga con tentaziones, i persecuciones, a los que llegan a él, i hallándome yo

mui debil para sufrirlas, i resistirlas, pienso, que no podré perseverár.

VALDÉS. Me plazze, que me hayais dicho esto, porque estoi zierto, de que haziendóos volvér la hoja, i leér mas adelante de esto, que habeis oído dezír, perdereis el temór, que teneis. Porque de tanto como eso, os asegura san Pablo, diziendo a los miedosos, como vos, que Dios es justo, /i fiel, i que no consentirá *f. 55.* de modo alguno, que seamos tentados, ni castigados mas de aquello, a lo cual, podrán resistir nuestras fuerzas: i aun en esto, dize, que nos ayudará con su grázia, paraque mas fázil i lijeramente resistamos a ello. De manera, Señora, que podeis tener por zierto, que en la vida presente no permite Dios, que uno suyo sea mas tentado, mas castigado, ni mas perseguido, de cuanto conoze, que le bastará el ánimo a hazér resistenzia. I así, a los mas fuertes promete fuertes tentaziones, castigos, i persecuciones, i con los débiles, se conduze apaziblemente. Tenemos el ejemplo de esto en Job, que del Demonio, por permiso de Job. Dios, fué tentado, i perseguido, quanto su pazienza era bastante a soportár. Pero mi-

\* K 4

rád, que siempre tuvo Dios la mano al Demonio, que no le tocasse en la vida: i así por esto, como por lo que dize David, que los consuelos, que Dios interiormente mandaba a su alma, eran segun las aflicciones, i angustias, con las cuales era atormentada; os podeis confirmár en esta verdád, que Dios castiga i aflije a los suyos tanto, cuánto vee, que podrán soportár, i no mas. De manera, que por este tanto, no debeis dejar de tomar esta cristiana empresa, i tomada, perseverár en ella, hasta salir valientemente con ella, puesto que es así, como dize san Pablo, que no reziben corona de gloria, sino los que caminando por este camino, combaten valerosamente contra sus adversarios.

JULIA. La vida me habeis dado con esto, porque os prometo, que yo era fuertemente tentada de este temór.

VALDÉS. Siempre, Señora, que os vinieren semejantes cosas a la fantasía, pensád, que son por obra del Demonio, i resistidlas siempre con el escudo de la fé, i si con éste, no pudiéreis deshazer una tal imaginazió, comunicadla libremente con alguna persona espiritual,

que veais vos, que la supiere entender, i entendida, supiere socorremos en ella.

JULIA. De tales personas, hai hoi tanta carestía, como de moscas blancas.

VALDÉS. Tanto mas teneis vos de qué dar grázias a Dios, pues que os ha puesto en estado, de que en aquesta carestía, que dezís tendreis lo que os será *sufiziente*. Tambien quiero otra cosa de vos. Guardaos, de que por ahora, no os ocupeis en leér, ni en querer saber, cosas curiosas, aunque sean santas, de manera, que vuestro entendimiento curiosamente se ocupe en ellas. Porque, para este prinzipio, os sevirá mucho mas la lección de cosas senzillísimas, que os inflamen la voluntad: i creedme, que no os digo esto, sin mucha causa. I porque en éste ejerzizio cristiano estoi zierto, que conozereis por experienzia, la verdad de lo que aquí de mí habeis oído, i otras muchas verdades cristianísimas; i porque he visto por experienzia, que muchas personas, luego que las conozen, las van hablando, i comunicando, sin considerazióu alguna, de donde nazen algunos inçonvenientes, mirád, f. 56. Señora, que en caso tal, os sepais gobernár

Leér  
cosas cu-  
riosas.

No pla-  
ticár con  
personas.

sabiamente: i procurád de hazér como las buenas ovejas, que muestran al pastór la yerba, que comen, en la lana, i en la leche, que le dán; i no, como las malas, que se la muestran, tornándola a arrojar por la boca. I hagoos sabér, que la doctrina cozida, i dijerrida, en el ánimo haze su fruto, i que la que de repente sale por la boca, no alimenta al ánimo: i yo deseo, que vos tengais la doctrina en el ánimo, i no enzima de la lengua.

JULIA. Bién está: Ayúdeme Dios en todo, i vos asimismo ayudádme a componér el hombre interiór, pues que tán bien me habeis mostrado, cómo he de adornár el interiór.

Adornár  
el hom-  
bre in-  
teriór.

Compa-  
razión.

VALDÉS. Adornád, vos Señora, primeramente el interiór, i yo os prometo, que no tendreis nezesidad de mí consejo, ni del de persona del mundo, para componér el interiór. I paraque me creais esto, quiero mostrároslo por una semejanza, i si ella tuviere algo de repugnante, disimuládmelo. Cuando un buen médico quiere sanár a un cuerpo sarnoso, no comienza a curarle, rayéndole la sarna de fuera, porque conoze, que si bien por entonzes la quita, luego vuelve a salir otra de



nuevo. Ni menos, comienza a curarle con unziones, porque conoze, que aun quando la quite en la parte de fuera, se entra dentro del cuerpo, i es causa de otra enfermedad mayor. Mas si el tal, es Médico bueno i experto, la primera cosa que haze es, considerár la causa de donde prozede la tal sarna, i entendida, haze, que el paziente, o sarnoso, tome por la boca aquellas medizinas, que conoze ser propósito para sanár aquella indisposizi3n del cuerpo, de donde prozede la sarna, porque conoze, i sabe, que sanada la indisposizi3n interi3r, sin dificultád alguna, se cae la sarna interi3r. De la misma manera, un médico espirituál, quando quiere sanár un cuerpo vizioso, o lizenzioso, no ha de empezár quitando las superfluidades exteriores, porque como queda dentro la raíz del vizio, luego vuelven a salir las otras, si no por la misma parte, por otra quizá mas peligrosa. Ni menos ha de empezár con unziones de zere-

<sup>1</sup> L' altro di nuova. Yo prefiero la leccion de la Nota —*altra di nuovo*. Pero, sin alterár el texto, pienso que puede traducirse: *luego* vuelve a salir al *día siguiente* [otra] nueva.

Zeremonias.

monias superstiziosas, i obras exteriores, las cuales, aunque quiten los vizios exteriores, los meten en lo interiór, i así la enfermedad es mas peligrosa, i mas perniziosa. Pero si es médico experimentado, vistos los vizios, i consideradas las superfluidades exteriores, conoze la causa de donde prozeden, i conozida, aplica las medizinas, que le parece ser nezesarias para sanár la enfermedad interiór, porque sabe de zierto, que sanada, luego los vizios i superfluidades zesan. ¿Entendeis lo que quiero dezír?

JULIA. Sí, lo entiendo; i aunque hayais hablado un poco de cosas suzias, porque lo habeis dicho bien, os lo sufro. I pues que no me quereis dezír nada de esto, dezidme a lo menos, cómo he de gobernarme en las cosas devotas exteriores.

f. 57. VALDÉS. Tomád esta devozión interiór, que yo os ofrezco, i ella os gobernará en toda otra: mas declaradme, de qué devoziones exteriores entendeis.

JULIA. La misa, el sermón, la lección, la orazión, el ayuno, la confesión, la comunión, i la limosna. De cada una de estas cosas

querría, que de todos modos me dijéseis, así brevemente, vuestro parecer, en torno al modo, que he tener para ejerzitar-me en ellas. I no os excuseis, porque no os admitiré excusa ninguna.

VALDÉS. En fin, vos, Señora, quereis ser siempre obedezida, i teneis razón. Por tanto, digo, que debéis oír la misa con mucha aten- La misa.  
ción. I porque en ella hai tres cosas principales, la adoración del santísimo sacramento, la doctrina de la epístola, i del evangelio, i las oraciones; podreis sacar fruto de todas tres. De la adoración, sacareis un nuevo i ferviente deseo de incorporaros, por fé i amor, en la pasión de Cristo, i de matár vuestro viejo hombre por Cristo, i de resuzitár vuestro nuevo hombre con Cristo. De la doctrina, tomareis siempre alguna cosa, en qué pensár aquél día. De este modo, si oís que el clérigo dize el Evangelio, que comienza, *In principio erat verbum*, cuando llega a aquello, *dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri, his<sup>1</sup>, qui credunt in nomine eius*, que quiere dezir, “Dios dió facultád i potestád, paraque fuesen hijos de

<sup>1</sup> El orijínal — ijs.

Dios todos los que creen en su nombre;" os podreis detener, pensando en la suma bondad, i misericordia de Dios, con la cual llama, a una tan vil criatura, a una tan alta i exzelente dignidad, como es, el ser hija de Dios, i esto solamente por creer en Cristo. Asimismo, si oís leer aquella epístola de san Pablo, que comienza: *Hoc sentite in vobis, quod in Christo Iesu, qui cum in forma Dei esset, &c.*: que quiere dezir, " Hazed, hermanos, que vuestros ánimos tengan el mismo desprecio del mundo, i de su propia estimación, que conozeis que tuvo Cristo Jesús, el cual siendo hijo de Dios, se humilló a tomár hábito de siervo, con el que conversó aquí en el mundo;" procurád deteneros, pensando en la profunda humildad, de Cristo, de tal manera, que este pensamiento confunda vuestra soberbia, i os haga toda humilde, deseosa de imitár la humildad, i la mansedumbre de Cristo. De este modo podreis recojér siempre de la Epístola, o del Evangelio, alguna consideración con que entreteneros.

JULIA. Ya lo entiendo. Seguíd mas adelante.

VALDÉS. De las oraciones, tomareis ocasión, para elevár vuestra alma a Dios, rogándole interiormente, que azepte lo que el Sacerdote, en nombre de toda la Iglesia, le pide.

JULIA. ¿I os pareze, que yo deba oír misa cada día?

VALDÉS. De los de fiesta, si es posible, no dejeis ninguno; de los otros, dejareis solamente aquellos, en que ocupada en alguna obra de caridad, no la pudiéreis oír, sin separaros de ella. A oír el sermón <sup>f. 58.</sup> ireis con el ánimo humilde, i obediente, como si fuéreis a oír a Cristo. I quando oyéreis dezír al predicadór alguna cosa, que os parezca buena, con una secreta oración rogád a Dios, que la imprima en vuestra memoria, i os dé su grázia, i favór, con que la podais ponér por obra.

JULIA. I si el predicadór es de aquellos, que se usan por el mundo, que no predicán a Cristo, sinó cosas vanas, i curiosas, o de filosofía, i de no sé qué Teolojías, o de sus sueños, i fábulas; ¿quereis que yo vaya a oírlo?

Misa  
cada día.

El ser-  
món.

Predica-  
dór vano.

VALDÉS. En cuanto a esto, vos hareis como mejor os pareziere: de mí os sé dezír, que en todo el año, no tengo peores ratos, que los que pierdo en oír, a algunos de aquellos predicadores, que vos sabiamente habeis pintado: i así los oigo pocas vezes.

JULIA. Eso es no quereros ejerzitar en la virtud de la pazienza.

VALDÉS. Sea lo que se quiera: lo que en el púlpito querría yo, es, oír predicár a Cristo, si fuese posible. Bien es verdad, que todavía, por malo que sea el predicadór, es bueno oirlo, aunque no sea sinó porque vista la nezesidad que tienen las almas cristianas de oír la doctrina de Cristo, os inflameis para pedir ardentisimamente a Cristo, que envíe, en su Iglesia predicadores, que prediquen i enseñen, pura i sinzeramente, su santísima doctrina. La lección, ya os he dicho, que, por ahora, querría, que fuese de cosas senzillísimas, que os inflamasen la voluntad, i no os ocupasen el entendimiento. I quando leyéreis en cosas de la sagrada Escritura, habeis de pensár, que habla Dios con vos, i por eso, habeis de dirijiros a ella, con ánimo

La lección.

En la sagrada Escritura.

humilde i obediente, i pensár, que leéis, no para sabér razonár, sinó para entender como habeis de vivir. En la sagrada Escritura habeis de buscár medizina contra las tentaciones, a ejemplo de Cristo, que siendo tentado del Demonio, en el desierto, a cada una de sus tentaciones, le respondió con un dicho de la sagrada Escritura. En la misma, habeis de buscár remedio contra las adversidades, contra las persecuciones, i trabajos del mundo; porque como dize san Pablo: Todo lo que allí está escrito, está escrito para nuestra doctrina.

JULIA. ¿Cuales son los libros, que vos llamaís senzillísimos?

VALDÉS. De los que yo usé un tiempo son: Libros  
un librito, que llaman, *De imitatione Christi*: paraleér.  
i el otro, de *Cassiano*: i el de san Jerónimo,  
de las *Vidas de los Eremitas*: i pienso, que  
todos estos están en vulgár. Esto es en  
cuanto a la lectura. La oración es un levanta- La ora-  
tamiento del ánimo a Dios, con deseo de zión.  
alcanzar de Él, lo que se pide. El modo de  
orár, i lo que se ha de pedir en la oración, es  
como nos lo enseña Cristo por san Mateo,

diziendo: “ Cuando quisiéreis hazér oraziôn, no hareis como los hipócritas, los cuales acostumbrañ orár en las reuniones de las jentes, i en los cantones de las plazas, para ser vistos de los hombres: i digoos la verdád, que ya los tales, rezibieron su galardón. Tu, pues

f. 59. cuando quisieres orár, éntrate en tu cámara, i zerrada tu puerta, haz tu oraziôn a tu Padre, el que está en secreto, i tu Padre, el que [mira] en secreto, te remunerará en público.” Por estas palabras nos enseña Cristo, que nuestra oraziôn ha de ser secreta, así por huír la ambiziôn, cómo porque el ánimo, quieto en lo exterior, mas fázilmente se aquietta en lo interiór. I dize en seguida Cristo: “ I cuando oráreis, no gasteis muchas palabras, como hazen los Jentiles.” Donde muestra, que quiere en la oraziôn pocas palabras, mas mucha fé, i mucho afecto. Despues dize: “ Por tanto, vosotros orareis de esta manera. *Pater noster, qui es in cœlis,*” &c. Donde nos enseña, que en la oraziôn no hemos de pedir cosas curiosas, ni supérfluas, sino solamente, las que nos pareziéren nezesarias, para la gloria de Dios; para la salud de las almas de



nuestros prójimos, i nuestras; i para sustentár nuestras vidas. El cómo hemos de orár, nos enseña en otro lugar Cristo, diciendo: "Todo lo que pidiéreis con confianza, os será dado." De modo, que paraque la oración sea buena, ha de ser, en secreto, con pocas palabras, i con mucho afecto, i con honesta i justa petición, i con entera fé, i confianza, de que Dios nos dará lo que le pidiéremos. También nos enseña Cristo en otro lugar, que seamos importunos, i que perseveremos en la oración. I porque la oración vocal, muchas veces enziende, i levanta el ánimo a la oración mental, no querría, Señora, que os obligáseis a zierto número de Sálmos, o de Padre-nuestros: paraque esteis siempre libre, i que enviándoos Dios en la oración, alguna buena inspiración, os podais detenér en ella tánto, cuanto sintiéreis, que vuestra alma la gusta.

JULIA. Esto no lo entiendo, si no me lo declarais por algun ejemplo.

VALDÉS. Quiero dezír, que si diciendo el *Pater noster*, llegais a dezír, "*adveniat regnum tuum*," i en aquel lugar, Dios os mostrare la felicidad que el ánimo tiene, cuando reina

Dios en *él*; que os detengais en aquella consideración. I, de la misma manera, que si diziendo, "*cor mundum crea in me Deus, et spiritum rectum innoua in visceribus meis*," esto es, "Crea en mí, Dios, el corazón limpio, i renueva en mis entrañas el espíritu recto;" sintiéreis, que vuestro corazón comienza a inflamarse con el deseo de esta limpieza, i vuestras entrañas se comienzan a abrir, ansiosas, de que el Espíritu Santo sea en ellas renovado; sin pasar mas adelante, con el pensamiento de Cristo crucificado, aumenteis el fuego de vuestro corazón, i abrais mas las puertas de vuestras entrañas, paraque él quede limpio, i ellas vayan llenas del Espíritu Santo. Esto hareis así, no habiéndoos obligado a zierto número de Salmos, o de Padre-nuestros. ¿Entendeislo ahora?

JULIA. Bastantemente.

VALDÉS. El ayuno, en quanto es abstinentia, depende de la sagrada Escritura, i sirve a la caridad. Portanto, siempre dejaré a vuestra discreción, que hagais tanta abstinentia, cuanta conoziéreis seros nezesaria

f. 60. *f* para destruir al viejo hombre, i vivificár al

nuevo: i seré siempre de parezér, que hayais de establezér la abstinenzia, mas en la cantidad de los manjares, que en la calidád, i de esta manera podreis, siempre que quisiereis, ayunár, sin que nadie lo perziba. En cuanto a los ayunos de la Iglesia, hareis como hazen los otros, que, en esto, no os doi regla alguna. Bien os quiero avisár de esto, que si los prezeptos, como dicen, obligan, segun la intenzió del que los dió; yo pienso, que son pocos, los que cumplen el prezepto del ayuno.

JULIA. ¿Porqué?

VALDÉS. Porque pocos cumplen con el efecto, que la Iglesia quiso que alcanzasen con el ayuno.

JULIA. ¿De donde sabeis vos esa intenzió de la Iglesia?

VALDÉS. De lo que [se] canta en el prefazio toda la Cuaresma diziendo, “*Qui corporali ieiunio vitia comprimis, mentem elevas, virtutem largiris et premia,*” esto es, “Tú, Dios, el cual con el ayuno corporal refrenas los vicios, levantas la mente, das la virtud i los prémios.” De donde parece, que la Iglesia quiso, que por medio del ayuno, nosotros cris-

La con-  
fesión.

tianos, mortificásemos los apetitos sensuales, que nos inzitan a los vizios, i que levantásemos nuestras almas a Dios, paraque fuesen galardonadas con premios de virtudes cristianas. La confesión es una cosa tán espiritual, e interna, que podeis, Señora, creér, que si leeis todo cuanto se ha escrito de ella, i si de ella ois hablar por los Ángeles del zielo, no acabareis con saberos bien confesar, si, antes, Dios no mueve vuestro corazón, al conozimiento de vuestra poquedad i miseria, paraque os humilleis ante la presenzia de su divina Majestád; i alumbrá vuestro entendimiento, e inflamá vuestra voluntád, al conozimiento de su infinita bondád, i misericordia, paraque cordialmente creais en Cristo, i ameis a Cristo. De esta verdád quiero, Señora, que os persuadais, paraqué cuando Dios tocara vuestro corazón, i moviere vuestra voluntád, dandoos conozimiento, que, por vuestros pecados, habeis perdido su grazia, i enjendrando en vos horrór de ellos, i deseo de confesarlos, para volver a recobrar su grazia, estando zierta, de que esto, no lo podeis saber hazér, sin favór i grazia de Dios;—interiormemente os encomendeis

a Él, suplicando, que abra los ojos de vuestro entendimiento, paraque con verdad os conozcais, i alumbre los ojos de vuestra alma, paraque enteramente os confieis en Cristo, i ardientemente ameis a Cristo. Este es el primér aparejo, que debeis hazér para confesaros, i porque, como os he dicho, a la confesión se ha de ír con profunda humildád, i con firme fé, i ardiente caridád, conviene, Señora, que a la humildád vayais por el conozimiento de vos misma, en el que debeis entrár profundamente, de la manera, que ya os he dicho, i que a la fé i caridád, vayais por el conozimiento de Dios, en el que os ejerzitareis con las consideraciones, que haze poco habeis oido.

JULIA. Bien quisiera, que me las *vol. f. 61.* viéseis a repetír, si no fuese tarde.

VALDÉS. Bastará, que vos misma, entre vos sola, las traigais a vuestra memoria. Hecho este segundo aparejo, quiero, Señora, que examineis bien vuestros afectos, i qué cosas os inzitan, que sean de calidád, que os puedan separár de Dios. Hareis este examen, poniendoos delante, la lei de Dios, entendida

de la manera, que aquí hemos razonado. Después de esto quiero, que poniendo de una parte, los afectos desordenados, que habeis conozido en vos, i de otra parte la lei de Dios, traigais a vuestra memoria los ejerzizios, que habeis tenido, las cosas en las cuales os habeis ocupado, los negocios que habeis tratado, las personas con las cuales habeis conversado, i aquellas de quien habeis razonado, los libros en que habeis leído, los designios, que habeis hecho, i los pensamientos en los cuales os habeis deleitado; i quiero, en todas estas cosas, tomándolas una por una, examineis, qué es lo que habeis hecho, dicho, o pensado, que sea, o pueda ser, contra la lei de Dios, comenzando del primér dia, i discurriendo hasta el día que

Omisión. os quereis confesar. I quiero mas, que examineis tambien lo que en todo este tiempo habeis dejado de hazér, dezír, o pensár, que habria podido redundár en honra de Dios, i en utilidád de vuestra alma, i en gananzia espiritual, o temporal, de vuestros prójimos. Que así como en lo que pecamos, por cometér, mostramos nuestra iniquidád, i descubrimos nuestro mal ánimo con Dios, i con nuestros

prójimos; así, ni mas ni menos, en lo que pecamos, por omisión, publicamos nuestra poca fé, i menór caridad, i el poco respeto, i amor, que tenemos a Dios, i al prójimo, i, como hemos dicho, estamos obligados a amár a Dios sobre todas las cosas, i al prójimo como a nosotros mismos. Hechos estos aparejos, i sintiendo vuestra alma ya humillada por el conozimiento de su propria malizia, i malignidad, i mui firme en la fé, i mui inflamada en la caridad, con grandísimo horrór de vuestros pecados, i sintiendo la molestia de vuestros afectos, os pondreis al pie del confesór, llevando aquel mismo enojo contra vos misma, i sintiendo aquella misma confusión, que si fuéseis a pedir perdón a un gran Príncipe, del cual hubiéseis rezibido grandísimos benefizios, i al cual malignamente hubiéseis hecho terribles traiziones. I así, con esta tál preparación, abatiendo, i echando por tierra, la presunzió i arroganzia humana, clara i abiertamente, le descubrireis todas las cosas, en que conozereis haber desobedezido a Dios por malizia, por ignoranzia, por descuido, i por debilidad. I si el confesór es persona, que

Confesár  
los afec-  
tos.

sienta i guste, las cosas espirituales; quiero, que le manifesteis i descubrais los afectos, que os mueven, inclinan, i llevan, a las ofensas i pecados, porque siendo él tál, os dará tal consejo, con el cual los podais mortificár.

JULIA. Nunca oí dezír tal cosa en mi vida,  
f. 62. que de los afectos he de confesarme.

VALDÉS. Si no los quereis confesár al sa-  
zerdote, confesadlos a Dios, diciendo con  
David: *Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cog-  
nosco*: i además, *Ecce enim [in] iniquitatibus  
conceptus sum, et in peccatis concepit me mater  
mea*, esto es: “Porque yo conozco mi iniqui-  
dád,” i a mas, “He aquí, pues, soi enjendrado  
en iniquidades, i en pecados me conzibió mi  
madre.” I tánto, Señora, cuánto mas de mal  
se os haze el confesár, que viven en vos estos  
afectos; tánto mas, i mejór, los debeis confesár,  
porque mas abajais vuestra naturál arrogan-  
zia: i así os ejerzitareis mas en la virtud de la  
humildád. I advertíd, Señora, que no quiero,  
que seais superstiziosa, ni escrupulosa, en la  
confesión; porque os basta confesár al sazer-  
dote aquellas cosas, que vos conozeis haber  
hecho con ánimo desobediente a Dios: de las

No su-  
perstizi-  
osa.



cuales os doleis tanto, que conoziendo, que podeis vivir sin hazerlas, teneis firme propósito, i deliberación, de no hazerlas jamás. Mas de los defectos, sin los cuales a penas se vive en esta presente vida, que son señales de ánimo no mortificado, os confesareis continuamente a Dios, suplicándole, que os favorezca con su grazia, paraque, hecha enteramente la mortificación de vuestro hombre viejo, zesen en vos aquellos defectos.

JULIA. ¿Esos defectos, no los he de confesar al sazerdote?

VALDÉS. No, por obligazón, porque no son pecados, que pertenezcan a la confesión: antes, estos propriamente son aquellos, de los cuales os dije poco antes, que David ruega ser alimpiado, llamándolos, defectos secretos. Hecha vuestra confesión de esta manera, i tomada vuestra absoluzión del sazerdote; quiero, Señora, que refrescando en vuestra memoria la autoridad, que Cristo dió a los sazerdotes, diziéndoles, “ Todo lo que ligáreis sobre la tierra, será ligado en el zielo; i todo lo que desatáreis sobre la tierra, será desatado en el zielo; ” creais firmemente, que Dios os ha per-

Autori-  
dád de  
sazer-  
dotes.

donado todos vuestros pecados, i os ha reducido a su grazia. Pero mirád, que no quiero, que penseis, que, por eso, os los ha perdonado, porque los habeis confesado; porque esto sería atribuiros lo que no es vuestro. Por esto quiero, que penseis, que Dios os los ha perdonado, porque creéis en Cristo, amais a Cristo, i habeis colocado vuestra esperanza en Cristo, i que los habeis confesado, porque Dios quiere, que los confeseis.

JULIA. Yo bien entiendo esto, mas querría saber de vos, qué opinión es la vuestra, en torno a elejir el confesor.

Cual ha  
de ser el  
confesor.

VALDÉS. Porque tengo por zierto, que buena parte del fruto de la confesión consiste en el buen confesor, al que perteneze, no solo dar la absoluzion, sinó con gravedad i severidad, reprender los pecados, i animar al que se confiesa, a las virtudes cristianas, i darle remedios convenientes, segun la calidad de la persona, para venzér los afectos, i los apetitos,  
f. 63. que le inclinan a pecar; ¿quiero, Señora, que empleeis toda vuestra prudenzia, i toda vuestra autoridad en elejir un confesor, que sea mui al propósito, si lo pudiéreis hallar tál, que por

doctrina, sepa i entienda el vivir cristiano, i haya alcanzado, i verificado con la experiencia, lo que haya leído en los libros, debeis anteponerlo a todos los otros, i tomarle. Con este tál, comunicareis vuestros defectos, porque, como bien experimentado, os sabrá dár tales consejos, con los cuales, yendo mortificando los afectos, vayais dejando los defectos. I porque una tal persona se halla pocas vezes, cuando hayais de hazer elección entre un letrado, sin experiencia de este vivir cristiano, i un experimentado sin letras, quiero, que tomeis antes un experimentado. Porque, así como os sabrá dár mejor razón del camino de aquí a Jerusalém, una persona, que, por haberlo caminado, esté práctica en él, que otra, que le sepa por cosmografía, aunque la supiese mas que Tolomeo; así os sabrá mejor introducir, i llevar por el camino cristiano uno, que ha ido por él, i va; que otro, que le ha leído, i lee. El cual, porque, como dize san Pablo, no alcanza a las cosas, que son del Espíritu de Dios, no puede, de modo alguno, llevar a otro, por donde él no ha ido jamás. I porque conozco, que, para vos, os está mejor; quiero,

que elijais mas bien un confesór sin letras, pero con experienzia de las cosas espirituales, si le pudiéreis conozer tal; que uno con letras solas. I en este punto, fíaos de mí, porque no hai mayor ziego, que el que se persuade, que vee. I advertíd, Señora, que así como quiero, que al confesór experimentado en el camino cristiano, le pidais su parezér i consejo, en todas vuestras cosas, i en todas ellas le deis mucho crédito; también así me parece, que del no experimentado, no tomeis mas que la absoluzion. Esto digo, porque sé por experienzia, que los tales, muchas vezes, queriendo echarla de sábios, os dicen cosas, que no pertenezan al ofizio de verdadero cristiano, con las cuales os hazen, que contra vuestra voluntad los tengais en poco, i esto no haze nada al propósito en un tan alto sacramento. Pienso, que en esto quedéis satisfecha.

JULIA. Sí quedo: seguíd mas adelante.

La comunión.

VALDÉS. De la sagrada comunión, en donde, nosotros los cristianos, partizipamos del preziosísimo cuerpo, i sangre, de Jesu Cristo nuestro Señor, no quisiera deziros poco, porque, aun con deziros mucho, no creo será

posible, que yo quede satisfecho. Mas considerando, que falta ya poco, de aquí a la noche; i que gran parte de lo que he dicho sobre la confesión, sirve para la comunión; pasaré brevemente por esto. I así digo, Señora: que a la comunión os ha de llevár el ardiente deseo de uniros con Cristo, con fé, con esperanza, i con caridad: cuyas tres virtudes, quiero que aviveis en vuestra alma, quando vais a comulgar: i quiero que vayais fundada en humildad, /la cual, como muchas f. 64. veces os he dicho, adquirireis por el conozimiento de vos misma: quiero, que vayais llena de fé, de tál manera, que creais firmemente, que bajo aquellas espezies, está el verdadero cuerpo i sangre de nuestro Señor Jesu Cristo. El cual, habeis de pensár, que nos dejó, aquí en el mundo, paraque siempre que aquellas espezies se representasen a nuestros ojos corporales, refrescasen en nuestros corazones, la memoria de su pasión, en la cual, mediante su preziosísima sangre, establezió un nuevo pacto entre Dios i los hombres, derogando i anulando el viejo. I el nuevo pacto es, que nosotros los hombres, creamos ser justificados por

la sangre de Jesu Cristo: i que Cristo, perdonándonos nuestros pecados, nos justifica. Quiero mas, que vayais, llena de confianza en la promesa de Cristo, mui segura, de que aquel manjár zelestiál, os ha de dar mucho poder i fortaleza, para caminár animosamente, por el camino cristiano, i os ha de asegurár, i defendér de los combates, i asaltos de vuestros afectos, i apetitos sensuales; i ayudár así a la mortificación del hombre viejo, i a la vivificación del nuevo: porque habeis de tener por ziertó, que todos estos efectos, i muchos otros mas, haze en el ánimo la santísima comunión del preziosísimo cuerpo, i sangre de Jesu Cristo nuestro Señor. I por esto, tengo yo por cosa loable, i útil la frecuentación de la comunión. [Mucho mas] todavía, en las personas, que habiéndose puesto delante de los ojos la idea de la perfeczióu cristiana, han empezado a caminár ázia ella. I así quiero, que vos, Señora, luego que comenzeis a caminár por este camino, comenzeis tambien a frecuentár la comunión, yendo siempre a ella con el aparejo que os he dicho. Vuestra limosna será tánta, cuánta fuere vuestra cari-

La limos-  
na.

dád: pero mejor diré, que en tanto será buena vuestra limosna, en cuanto prozediere de pura caridad, i verdadero amor de Dios.

JULIA. ¿I no me dareis alguna regla, que yo tenga, en compartír mis limosnas?

VALDÉS. No os daré otra regla, sinó la de la caridad. Amád, vos, a Dios, i con eso, sabreis cómo habeis de compartír vuestras limosnas.

JULIA. Digolo, porque el predicadór dijo un día, que según el orden de la caridad, es-  
tábamos mas obligados a nuestros prójimos, Orden  
de la  
caridad.  
que a nosotros mismos.

VALDÉS. Lo que dijo el predicadór es: que la caridad bien ordenada, comienza de Dios: i que allí la aprenden las personas: cómo han de amár a sí, i cómo han de amár al prójimo. I dijo mas: que aquél, que está en caridad perfecta, muchas vezes pospone su interés particular, por el bien del prójimo. Lo que vemos en muchos lugares en san Pablo, el cual dize: que la caridad no busca sus cosas propias: i en cuanto al compartír la limosna, el mismo san Pablo, sin diferencia alguna dize: *Facite bonum ad omnes*: i queriendo algun

M

f. 65. tanto venir al particular / dize: pero mayormente a los buenos cristianos, ateniéndose a lo que dize Cristo, que a aquél, el cual rezibe al Profeta, solo porque es Profeta, dá Dios dón de profecía: i que a aquél, que rezibe al justo, solo porque es justo, dá Dios dón de justizia. ¿Parézeos, que sean dones éstos de abandonarse?

JULIA. Antes, me he alegrado tanto de oír esto, que me muero de gana, de conozér alguna persona justa, para hazerla mil carizias, i mil • bienes, para ser yo tambien justa.

VALDÉS. Jentil contradiczió es esa. ¿No veis vos, que en este caso, os moveríais por vuestro interés, i no, como Cristo quiere, puramente por amor suyo? En fin, yo veo, Señora, que os contentaríais de hazér cualquiera cosa, que Dios os mandase, i quisiése de vos; con tal que os guardáseis vuestro amor para vos misma: i no me marabillo, porque en el mundo, no hai cosa mas dificultosa, que es, el hazerse la persona fuerza a sí propria: quanto mas en las cosas, que tocan al ánimo, donde no bastan fuerzas exteriores, ni industrias humanas. Mas, al fin, querais, o no querais,



yo os prometo, que habeis de dar vuestro amor a Dios.

JULIA. ¡Qué enfado!

VALDÉS. ¿Por enfado teneis vos, Señora, que habiendooos criado Dios, paraque le ameis, i habiéndooos Él, por tantas vías i maneras, mostrado su amor; os pida que le ameis?

JULIA. Dejádme estár con vuestras réplicas: que si yo tan prestamente lo pudiese hazér, yo os prometo, que no sería tarda: pero es menestér venir por tantos rodeos a este efecto, que, para deziros la verdad, yo no sé cómo vos entendeis esto. Pues que Dios me mandaba, que yo le diese todo mi amor, ¿porqué no me hizo Él de suerte, que lo pudiese hazér, siempre que yo, lo quisiéra, así como le podría dár esta ropa?

VALDÉS. La imposibilidad, o por dezír Pecado orijinal. mejor, la dificultád, nos viene del pecado orijinal.

JULIA. No puedo acabár conmigo, de que- Adám. rer bien, a ese Adám, cuando recuerdo los males, i dificultades, en que, por aquél su pecado, nos puso.

VALDÉS. Volvéd la hoja, Señora, i cada

\* M 2

Adám.  
Cristo.

vez, que pensando en esas dificultades, i males, quisiéreis mal a Adám, queréd bien a Cristo, que, por su obediencia os habilitó, paraque pudiéseis salir de los males, i de las dificultades, en que la desobediencia de Adám os puso.

JULIA. Vos dezís bien: mas como experimento el mal de la desobediencia de Adám, i no el bien de la obediencia de Cristo, no puedo tán bien volverme a amár á Cristo, como me voi a querér mal a Adám.

VALDÉS. También hallareis otra cosa mas bastante, si la considerais bien: que a Adam *le* podeis querér mal, haziendo vuestra voluntad, i a Cristo no podeis querér bien, sin contradézir a vuestra voluntad: i que a Adám *le* podeis querér mal, amandoos a vos misma, i a Cristo no podeis querér bien, si no dejais el amor propio, con que amais a vos misma. De manera, que si quereis, no querér mal a

f. 66. Adám, i querér bien a Cristo; poneos a experimentar el bien de Cristo, como experimentais el mal de Adám; i poneos a contradézir á vuestra voluntad, i a dejár vuestro amor propio, i experimentareis, tán presto, mas eficazmente el bien de la obediencia de

Cristo, que ahora experimentais el mal de la desobediencia de Adám.

JULIA. ¡Qué pertinazia teneis con este amor propio, i con esta voluntad! Ahora, yo os prometo, que no me amo tanto, cuanto vos pensais.

VALDÉS. Yo no pienso, que os amais, más, de cuanto descubris, i manifestais por vuestras palabras: i me parece, que si no os amáseis a vos propia, no querriais mal a Adám.

JULIA. Ahora, pues, *digo*, que no le quiero querér mal. Me andais cojiendo en palabras de manera, que me hazeis salir a dezír, lo que no pensé jamás, que saliese de mi boca. I, pues que por lo pasado, saqué buen fruto de vuestras razones, no quiero, que me quede nada, i así os quiero dezír una cosa, que mas me tiene confusa, i en que hallo mas dificultad, cuando quiero determinarme a entrár en este camino cristiano. Veamos, qué salida me dareis, i cómo me la acomodareis en el ánimo. El predicadór dize, que solamente azepta Dios aquellas buenas obras, que nosotros hacemos puramente movidos por el amor de Dios, sin que a ello nos mueva, ni temor

Cómo se sirve a Dios por amor.

Infierno i  
Paraíso.

de infierno, ni deseo, o amor de gloria, i esto creo yo zierito, que sea así, pues que él lo dize. Ahora, para dezír la verdad, i hablár con vos libremente, queriendó yo examinár bien mi ánimo, hallo, que no me movería a obrár cosa ninguna, si no fuese por temór del infierno, i, a vezes, por amor de la gloria, mas ninguna, por puro amor de Dios: porque yo sé de mí, que si no hubiese infierno, ni Paraíso, me *lo* pasaría bien en este mundo, viviendo en esta vida, moral, i loable, a los ojos del mundo, como he vivido hasta aquí, sin cuidarme de buscár mas adelante. Ahora, siendo esto así, como yo en verdad lo conozco en mí, i siendo verdad lo que el predicadór dize; yo hallo, por mi cuenta, que todo lo que yo haré de esta manera, será perdido, pues, que en efecto, conozco, que no me muevo a ello por amor de Dios, sinó por amor mio. No sé yo cómo me sabreis acomodár ésto.

VALDÉS. Así pudiese yo echár de vuestro ánimo, todo vuestro amor proprio, cómo sabré acomodár eso.

Compa-  
razión,

JULIA. A la prueba.

VALDÉS. Vos teneis, Señora, un esclavo,

comprado por vuestros dineros: i, aunque es vizioso, malvado, i mal inclinado, le quereis bien: i paraque él no ponga en efecto sus maldades i vizios, le amenazais continuamente con la galera, i con otros fuertes castigos. Si este tal esclavo tiene injenio, por no ir a galeras, i por no ser castigado, (i aun entendiendo, que vos le hazeis aquellas amenazas para bien suyo), no solamente trabaja por refrenár sus vizios, i venzér sus malas inclinaciones; sinó que comienza a quereros bien. *f. 67.*

Conoziedo vos esto, comenzais a tratarlo bien. Él, sintiendo i gustando el buen tratamiento, i la afición que le teneis, comienza también a serviros con dilijenzia, paraque le honreis, i le deis *de* buen grado, lo que ha menester. Así lo hazeis, i cuanto mas vos, en esto, le mostreis el amor, que le teneis, tanto mas creze en él, el amor i voluntád, que tiene de serviros. De modo, que ya no se abstiene de los vizios, i maldades, por temór de la galera, ni es dilijente en vuestro servicio por el buen tratamiento, que le hazeis; sinó por la buena voluntád i afición, que conoze, que le teneis: i aunque no hubiese galeras, i

aunque no le pudiéseis tratár bien; no dejaría de serviros, porque se halla obligado, por lo pasado, i porque conoze en vos, que merezeis ser servida i obedezida. Entonzes, viendo, vos, la bondád del esclavo, dándole carta de libertád, le hazeis libre, i ya él, os obedeze por amór, i no por temór, i os sirve como libre, i no como esclavo, i por gratitúd, i no por interés. De este mismo modo, se porta Dios con nosotros, porque conoze la mala inclinazió, la malignidad, i la iniquidad, de que somos herederos, por el pecado de nuestros primeros padres, queriéndonos bien por habernos criado, i redimido con la preziosísima sangre de su Hijo Jesu Cristo, nuestro Señor: i paraque no pongamos en ejecuzi3n nuestros desordenados apetitos, nos pone delante el infierno. I de aquí nazen las continuas amenazas de que está llena la sagrada Escritura. Los que, de nosotros, abrimos los ojos, i creemos, que hai infierno, i sabemos, de zierto, que Dios hará lo que dize, en castigár nuestros vicios con las penas del infierno; trabajamos por apartarnos de los vicios, para no incurrir en la pena, i asímismo, porque en algun modo

conozemos, que Dios nos ama. I, en tal caso, aun quando no nos movamos por puro amor, todavía Dios, vista nuestra obediencia, nos abre mas los ojos, a fin, de que conozcamos el bien del Paraíso. Conozémosle, i deseándole, comenzamos a aplicarnos a hazér la voluntad de Dios, paraque nos dé su gloria. Entónzes, azeptando Dios nuestra buena voluntad, nos abre mas los ojos, paraque conozcamos, de una parte, nuestra malizia, i de otra, su infinita bondád. Con este conocimiento, comenzamos a enamorarnos de Dios, i a obedezerlo, i servirlo, no ya, por miedo del infierno, ni por amor de la gloria, sinó solamente, porque hemos conozido, que Él es digno de ser amado, i que infinitamente nos ama. Entonzes, Dios nos dá carta de libertád, i nosotros no salimos de su servizio, por haber tenido la libertád, antes le estamos mas sujetos, i mas obedientes, pero no como esclavos, sinó como libres, no como merzenarios, sinó como hijos: i en esto consiste la libertád cristiana. ¿Haos <sup>f.</sup>satisfecho esto?

f. 68.

JULIA. Sí, mucho, mucho, i solamente me queda una duda: cual es la causa, que aun

Libertád  
cristiana.

cuando muchas personas sirven con temór, como esclavos, i por interés, como merzenarios, jamás llegan a servir, como hijos, con la libertad, que vos dezis?

VALDÉS. Es, que cuando sirven como esclavos, i quando sirven como merzenarios, se tienen, i juzgan ser perfectos, i no buscando otra perfeczió, se quedan siempre en aquella servidumbre, como dize san Pablo, que no teniendo notizia, de la justizia con la cual Dios justifica a los que en él creen, i queriendo justificarse por sus obras, no llegan jamás a parte de la justizia de Dios. Por tanto, es menester, Señora, que reduzcais a vuestra memoria, lo que os he dicho: que conviene tener siempre delante, la idea de la perfeczió cristiana, de la manera, que yo os la pinté, i mejor, si mejor podeis: así, para pensár, que no habeis de zesár en este camino cristiano, hasta que os halleis mui zerca de ella; como, paraque siempre que cotejáreis vuestra perfeczió con ella, os tengais por imperfecta, i no presumais de vos, antes, tengais siempre causa legítima, para humillaros: por que, así como los ángeles malos perdieron la gloria, por



soberbia; así quiere Dios, que nosotros la ganemos, por humildad.

JULIA. Al fin quedo yo satisfecha de esto, i con dos palabras, que me digais, de la libertad cristiana, os dejaré ir con Dios.

La libertad cristiana.

VALDÉS. Sabéd, Señora, que la libertad cristiana es una cosa, que por mucho que se razone, i por bien, que se practique, no se puede jamás entender, sino por experiencia: de manera, que tanto sabreis de ella, cuanto experimentáreis en vuestra alma, i nada mas. Por tanto, Señora, si la quereis aprender, poneos a experimentarla, i no tendreis nezesidad, de que yo os la diga. Mas, todavía, os quiero dezir esto, que, segun parece por lo que dize san Pablo; “siendo yo libre de todas las cosas, “me hize siervo de todos, para ganarlos a todos “para Cristo;”—la libertad del cristiano está en la conziencia: porque el verdadero i perfecto cristiano, es libre de la tiranía de la lei, del pecado, i de la muerte, i es señor absoluto, de sus afectos, i de sus apetitos. I, por otra parte, es siervo de todos, en cuanto al hombre exterior, porque está sujeto a servir a las nezesidades de su cuerpo, i a tener sujeta su

carne, i a servir a sus prójimos, segun su posibilidad; o con sus facultades, si las tiene, o con buena doctrina, si la *alcanza*; i con ejemplo de buena i santa vida. De manera, que una misma persona cristiana, en cuanto al espíritu, es libre, sin reconozér otro superior, que Dios; i en cuanto al cuerpo, está sujeta, a todas cuantas personas hai en el mundo, por Cristo.

Ya, Señora, habeis entendido, de dónde naze, la confusión de ánimo, en la cual, hasta aquí, habeis vivido, i juntamente el remedio, que podreis tomár para ella. Habeis f. 69. entendido, de dónde os viene la contradicción, que despues, que oisteis al Predicadór, sentís dentro de vos; i la manera, cómo os podreis librár de ella. Os he pintado, la idea de la perfección cristiana. Os he mostrado doze pasos, por los cuales, comenzareis a caminar ázia Cristo, sin ser vista del mundo. Os he satisfecho a algunas dudas, que se os han ocurrido. Ultimamente, habeis entendido, en qué consiste la libertad cristiana. Resta, ahora, que vos comenzeis luego, luego,

desde esta noche, a hazér prueba de vos, en aquellos pasos, que yo os he enseñado: Porque quiero, que mañana, me digais, lo que de ellos os parece. I, mirád, que siempre rogueis a Dios, que os guíe, i encamine con su grazia, sin consentír jamás, que os apartéis de Él. Porque este es el camino para llegar a la perfeczióu cristiana, i para gozár la libertád cristiana, a la cual, cuando hubiéreis llegado, podreis, con verdád, dezír con el Profeta David: “*Dominus regit me, et nihil mihi deerit.*” “*In loco pascuæ ibi me collocavit.*” Esto es: “El Señor es mi guía, no me faltará cosa alguna. Él me ha puesto en buena dehesa.”

Breve suma, de lo que contiene todo el  
Diálogo.

Cómo ha de entenderse, que el hombre fué  
criado a imájen de Dios. fo. 6

En qué consiste la felicidad del hombre.  
fo. 7

Qué cosas se consideran en el pecado ori-  
nál. fo. 9

Qué es, lo que, nosotros los cristianos, gana-  
mos en el bautismo. fo. 9

Dos efectos que *causa* la predicación del Evan-  
gelio en los ánimos de los cristianos. fo. 10

Qué cosa es Lei. fo. 11

Qué cosa es el fruto del Evangelio. fo. 12

De dónde naze la dificultád que las personas  
hallan en el camino de Dios. fo. 14

Zinco modos, o condiziones de personas. fo. 14

En qué consiste la perfeczióu cristiana. fo. 17

Naturaleza del Amor-proprio. fo. 12. 18. 33  
35. 51

La naturaleza del amor de Dios. fo. 18

Una breve declarazióu de los diez manda-  
mientos. fo. 19

- Un aviso cristiano, i nezesario, sobre la observanzia de los mandamientos. fo. 23
- Una regla cristiana, i evanjélica, que comprehende todos los mandamientos. fo. 23
- Una doctrina de san Juan, que consuela, a los que todavía no han llegado a la perfección. fo. 23
- Tres modos, en los cuales las personas pecan, por malizia, por ignoranzia, i por fragilidad. fo. 23
- Los frutos de la caridad, segun san Pablo. fo. 26
- ¿Qué cosa es fé. fo. 26 f. 70.
- La diferencia, que hai, entre la fé, i la esperanza, con una comparación. fo. 28
- División del hombre, segun san Pablo. fo. 30.
- Doze pasos para caminár a la perfección cristiana. fo. 31
- Cómo hemos de conózér al mundo. fo. 33
- Cómo hemos de conózér a nosotros mismos. fo. 34
- Que la persona se ha de aborrezér a sí propia. fo. 35
- Que para amár a Dios, es menestér conózér a Dios, i que, por tres caminos, le conozemos. fo. 35
- Uno, por luz natural. fo. 36

Otro, por el Testamento viejo.	fo. 36
Otro, por Cristo.	fo. 36
Cómo hemos de conozer a Cristo.	fo. 37
Una breve i pia declarazi3n del Credo.	fo. 39
Cómo hemos de amár a Dios, i al prójimo.	fo. 42
Cómo nos hemos de confiár en la Fé.	fo. 43
Cómo nos hemos de zertificár en la esperan- za.	fo. 44
Que el ejerzizio del cristiano ha de ser la mortificazi3n del hombre viejo, i la vivifi- cazi3n del nuevo.	fo. 46
De qué modo hemos de negarnos, a nuestras voluntades	fo. 46
De qué manera hemos de mortificár nuestros zinco sentidos corporales.	fo. 48
Que se han de mortificár los afectos interio- res.	fo. 48
Que nos examinemos cada noche, de lo que hubiéremos hecho por el día.	fo. 51
Que comuniquemos nuestras cosas con alguna persona espiritual.	fo. 52
Una considerazi3n contra el honor del mundo.	fo. 53
Otra considerazi3n contra la satisfacci3n de las cosas exteriores.	fo. 53

Consolación contra las tentaciones, i tribulaciones. fo. 54

Que se guarde de platicár con las personas del mundo. fo. 55

Que antes se ha de adornár el hombre interiór, que el interiór, por una comparazón. fo. 56

El fruto, que hemos de sacar de la Misa. fo. 57

Cómo, i con qué ánimo, hemos de oír el sermón. fo. 58

Cómo hemos de ponernos a leér la sagrada Escritura. fo. 58

Qué libros ha de leér un prinzipiante. fo. 58

El modo de orár. fo. 58

Cómo ha de ayunár una persona cristiana. fo. 59

De la Confesión. fo. 60

Cuál ha de ser el confesór. fo. 62

Cómo nos hemos de preparár para la comunión, i quien la puede frecuentár. fo. 63

Cuál ha de sér nuestra limosna. fo. 64

Qué orden tiene la caridad cristiana. fo. 64

Que comenzando a servir a Dios por temór, i por interés, se viene a servir por amor.

Esto se declara con una comparazón. fo. 66

En qué consiste la libertad cristiana. fo. 68

\*N





## DEL MISMO AUTÓR.

f. 71.

EN QUÉ MANERA EL CRISTIANO  
 ha de estudiár en su propio libro, i qué fruto  
 ha de sacár del estudio, i cómo la  
 santa Escritura le sirve de  
 intérprete, o comentario.

## Propuesta.

Habiéndoos muchas vezes oído dezír, que el estudio propio del cristiano debe ser en su propio libro, teniéndolo siempre abierto, i leyendo siempre en él; he deseado sabér, cuál es mi libro, i cómo he de estudiár en él, i qué utilidad sacaré de la lectura, aplicándome al estudio cristiano. I pues que vos, con vuestras palabras, habeis despertado en mí, este deseo, justa cosa será, que, asimismo, en esto me satisfagais.

## Respuesta.

Mientras que el hombre estudia en los libros ajenos, conoze los ánimos de los que compu-

sieron aquellos libros, pero no conoze a sí mismo. Ahora, porque perteneze al cristiano, conozer a sí mismo, conozér el ser que tiene, como hijo de Dios, por la rejenerazióu cristiana; suelo yo dezír, que el estudio proprio del cristiano, debe ser en su proprio libro. Porque, leyendo en él, conoze a sí mismo: i cuanto más, i mejór, se conoze, tanto mas fázilmente se desenamora de sí, i del mundo, i se enamora de Dios, i de Cristo. I esta debe ser vuestra intenzion, en esta lección de vuestro libro. I, por tanto, habeis de advertír, que leyendo en vuestro libro, no habeis de pensár, que Dios os considera tál, cual vos, os imajinais a vos mismo. Mas habeis de estar zierto, que Él os considera, en cuanto estais incorporado en Cristo, considerando en vos, lo que considera en Cristo. Entendido esto, que importa mucho, sabéd, que yo acostumbro

El ánimo  
el libro.

llamár a mi ánimo, mi libro, porqué en él se contienen mis opiniones, así las falsas, como las verdaderas: i en él, se halla mi confianza, i mi desconfianza; mi fé, i mi incredulidad; i mi esperanza, i mi descuido; mi caridad, i mi enemistád. En él tambien hallaré mi humil-

dád, i mi presunzió; mi mansedumbre, i mi *impazienza*; mi modestia, i mi soberbia; mi senzilléz, i mi curiosidád; mi resoluzi3n con el mundo, i mi respeto al mundo; *mi* resoluzi3n conmigo mismo, i mi amor propio. I en conclusi3n, en él se *halla*, cuanto tengo de *f. 72.* bueno, por el fav3r de Dios, i de Cristo; i cuanto he adquirido de malo, por la maldád mia natural. Este es mi libro, i esto es lo que yo leo en él, a cada hora, i en cada tiempo: i no hai ocupazi3n alguna, que me impida esta lecci3n. A vezes, me pongo a examinár las opiniones, que tengo, en el negozio cristiano; i en qué las fundo; cómo las entiendo; i cómo las siento. Otras vezes me pongo a examinár, qué cantidad tengo de confianza en las promesas de Dios; cómo dependo totalmente, en todas las cosas, de Dios; con qué voluntad pongo en ejecuzi3n, lo que yo conozco ser la voluntad de Dios. Otras vezes me pongo a considerár, cuánto me hallo firme i constante en la fé de Cristo, teniéndome por perdonado de Dios, i por reconciliado con Dios, en Cristo, i por Cristo. Considero, si la fé cristiana, tiene efecto en mí, haziéndome

Rejeneración.

mudár de mi natural; i si el vivir cristiano me ha hecho mudár de condición, i de costumbres: porqué ésta es la rejeneración, i la renovación cristiana. Otras vezes, voi pensando, si vive siempre en mí, el deseo de la venida de Cristo al juizio, como vive, en los que, deseándola, la esperan. O bien, imagino, cuánto se halla vivo en mí este deseo, i este pensamiento. Otras vezes, entro en una mui estrecha cuenta con migo proprio, examinando, cuánto amo yo a Dios, i a Cristo; si lo amo mas que a mí; i cuánto amo a mis prójimos; i si los amo tanto, quanto a mí. I, de ahí, voi examinando, todas mis cosas, i la intenzión con que me muevo a hazerlas, i me esfuerzo, para no dejarme engañar en alguna de ellas. Si veo, que puramente van enderezadas a la gloria de Dios, i de Cristo, i a la utilidad espiritual, i eterna de mis prójimos; conozco, que voi adelante con la caridad. Mas si veo, que va conjunta mi propria gloria, i mi proprio interés; conozco, que yo me estoi sin ninguna caridad, i incontinenti recurro a Cristo, i pongo en mi pensamiento, que Dios considera en mí, lo que en Cristo. Otras vezes, dando

una vista por todas mis cosas, voi examinando, qué cantidad tengo de humildad, i qué cantidad de presunzion; i qué cantidad de mansedumbre, i qué cantidad de impazienza; que cantidad de humildad, i qué cantidad de arroganzia, i de soberbia; qué cantidad de senzilléz, i qué cantidad de curiosidad; qué cantidad de resoluzion con el mundo, i qué cantidad de respeto al mundo; qué cantidad de resoluzion conmigo mismo, i qué cantidad de amor propio, i sensual. I, si para hazer este exámen, no me bastan las cosas, que me se ofrezan, practicando, i conversando entre los hombres; voi pensando, quando me se ofrezan, la tál, o la tál cosa, qué acontezió a tál, i a tál persona, cómo estaría zierto en la confianza, firme en la fé, solízito en la esperanza, ferviente en la caridad: cómo sería humilde, manso; cómo estaría resuelto / con f. 73. el mundo, no estimando sus honras, ni sus deshonoras; i resuelto conmigo propio, no estimando mis intereses, ni mis incomodidades; mis plazerres externos, i mis adversidades. De esta manera estudio yo en mi libro, i el fruto, que yo saco de esta lección es, que yo vengo

mui bien en conozimiento de lo que yo soi, i valgo, por mí, i cuánto valgo por Dios, i por Cristo; i así vengo en mayor conozimiento del beneficio de Cristo, i aprendo, del todo, a desconfiarme de mí, teniendo de mí mui pésima opinión, i a confiarme del todo, de Dios, i de Cristo, teniendo altísimos conzeptos de Dios, i de Cristo, i a azeptár de nuevo la justicia de Cristo, en el cual me conozco justo, siempre que en mí me conozco injusto. I así me acontece, que quanto mas continuamente leo en este mi libro, tanto mas creze en mí el sér, que tengo, por beneficio de Dios, i de Cristo, i falta el que tengo, como hijo de Adam. De donde resulta, que hallando yo siempre cosas nuevas de leér, en este mi libro, i viendo lo que yo adelanto estudiando en él, tanto me recreo de leér en él, que no me queda tiempo para leér en los libros de los otros. I así, los tengo todos zerrados, dejando solamente abierto el libro de la santa Escritura, del cual me sirvo, como de intérprete, o comentario, para entender mejor mi libro, pasando lijerísimamente por todas las cosas, que no me sirven a este efecto. Cuando quiero

La sagrada  
Escritura.

examinar mis opiniones en la cosa cristiana,  
 si son falsas, o verdaderas, las voy cotejando,  
 con las que se lee, que tenían los Santos, que  
 escribieron la santa Escritura. Considerando  
 la confianza, que David tenía en Dios, i [cómo] David.  
 estaba todo remitido a Dios; conozco mi con-  
 fianza, i mi desconfianza, i comienzo de nuevo  
 a confiár. Leyendo la fé cristiana, de aquellos La fé.  
 cristianos de la primitiva Iglesia, los cuales,  
 se reconocían justos, i santos en Cristo, i por  
 Cristo; conozco mi fé, i mi incredulidad, i  
 pido a Dios, que acreziente en mí la fé. Le-  
 yendo las parábolas, que decía Cristo, exhor- Las pa-  
 tándonos continuamente a que estuviésemos rábolas.  
 sobre aviso, esperando su venida al juicio, como El juicio.  
 en tiempo de los Apóstoles este día era espe-  
 rado con grandísimo deseo; conozco mi espe-  
 ranza, i mi descuido, i de ahí adelante vivo  
 mas sobre mí. Leyendo los efectos de la cari-  
 dad, que escribe san Pablo a los Corintios, Caridad.  
 i la caridad, que había entre los primeros  
 cristianos; conozco mi caridad, i mi enemis-  
 tad, i teniendo vergüenza de mi propio, suplico  
 a Dios, que me enajene de mí, i me una a sí.  
 Considerando la humildad i la mansedumbre, Humil-  
 dad.

que con efecto demostró Cristo, por todo el tiempo de su vida, i prinzipalmente en su pasión; conozco mi humildád, i mi mansedumbre, mi presunzi3n, i mi impazienza: i grandemente *cobro* afizi3n a la mansedumbre

f. 74. i *a* la humildád, considerando la modestia, i la senzilléz, con que se vivía, entre cristianos, al prinzipio de la publicazi3n del Evanjelio. I en cuanto vivían en común, i no tenían otro pensamiento, sinó el de saber a Cristo cruzificado; conozco mi modestia, i senzilléz, mi insolenzia, i curiosidad, i vengo *a tener* en horr3r toda curiosidad, abrazando la senzilléz. Leyendo, cuánto estaban los Ap3stoles \*resolútos con el mundo, cuando, siendo presos i azotados, porque predicaban a Cristo, iban alegres, i contentos, por ver, que habían padezido por Cristo; i considerando, cómo me contentaría yo, cuando fuese hallado de aquella manera, conozco mi resoluzi3n con el mundo, i mi respeto al mundo, i viéneme deseo de resolverme mej3r, de aquí adelante, con el mundo.

San Pablo consigo. Leyendo cuan resoluta estaba san Pablo consigo mismo, cuando dezía, que sabía contentarse, con aquello en que estaba, i tenía; mal,



i bien, poco, i mucho; i considerando, si yo puedo dezír lo mismo de mí; conozco mi resolución conmigo mismo, i mi amor propio, i comienzo a quererme mal, para no privarme de esta satisfazion, i perfeczion. I, finalmente, cotejando mis afectos, i mis apetitos, con los que yo leo en la santa Escritura, conozco bien, cuán vivos, i muertos están, i deseo no darles un día de vida. I de ésta manera, la santa Escritura, me sirve como de intérprete, o comentario, para estudiár mejór en mi libro, i mejór entenderlo. I así entiendo, si mi vivir cristiano, i mi mortificazion cristiana, responde bien, o mál, mucho o poco, a mi fé cristiana, i profesion cristiana: i gano Estima de sí. dos cosas, la una, que no me estimo, por la opinion, que los hombres tienen de mí, mala, i buena, sinó por la que yo mismo tengo de mí mismo, reservándome siempre la opinion, que Dios tiene de mí, conoziéndome miembro de Cristo. La otra, que poco a poco voi formando mi ánimo, reduziéndole con la imitacion Imitacion de Cristo. de Cristo, i de sus Santos, a lo que yo conozco en Él, i en ellos, deseoso \*, i ansioso de comprendér, i de conseguir, aquella per-

fecção, en la que, incorporado en Cristo, i hecho miembro de Cristo, soi comprehendido, aspirando, no por propria gloria, ni por proprio interés, sino por gloria de Dios, i de Cristo, i de la grázia del Evangelio de Cristo; a que me conozca Dios tan justo, pío, i santo, en mí mismo, como me conoce justo, pio, i santo en Cristo.

Vos me habeis pedido, que yo os diga, cuál es mi libro; i cómo se ha de estudiár en él; i qué fruto habeis de sacár de él. Yo os he respondido, que mi libro es mi ánimo: i que en éste estudio, quando examino qué cosa tengo en él: i la utilidad, que yo saco de él, es conózér a mí proprio, conózér a Dios, i a Cristo, i así desconfiarme de mí, i f. 75. confiarme en Dios, i en Cristo. I os he dicho, en qué manera me sirvo de la santa Escritura: como a modo de comentario, para poder mejor entendér mi libro. Resta, que tomando, para vos, lo que yo he dicho de mí, incontinenti os apliqueis á este utilísimo estudio, dejando a un lado todos los otros. I si Los estudios. al prinzipio os pareziére dificultoso, i desa-

brido; no por esto le dejeis: porque os zertifico, que en este estudio, aconteze, lo que suele acontecer en los otros, que se estudian: que al prinzipio son dificultosos, i desabridos; mas, los medios, son fáziles, i tienen algun sabór, i los fines son dulzísimos, i sabrosísimos. Zertificandoos, que tánto mas os acontecerá, en este estudio, que en los otros aconteze; quanto conseguireis mas utilidad en éste, si lo experimentáreis. La cual, sin comparazion alguna, es mucho mayór, que todo lo que se saca de todos los otros estudios. Antes, todos los otros, sin este, son causa de muerte, porque la prudenzia humana se haze fuerte, i robusta contra el espíritu. I así, los otros estudios hazen al hombre soberbio, i éste solo, echa, i manda por tierra a la prudenzia humana, i humilla al hombre, dándole conozimiento de sí mismo, [i] de lo que es suyo, i conozimiento de Dios, i de Cristo, i de lo que es por favór de Dios, e incorporado en Cristo: i así le va haziendo recobrar aquella dignidád, que perdió el primér hombre, haziéndole semejante a Cristo, i, por consiguiente, semejante a Dios. Al cual os encomendareis siempre, suplicán-

dole, que os mande su Espíritu Santo por maestro de este estudio: i pedidle lo mismo para mí, i para todos los que desean, i esperan la gloria, i honrra, e inmortalidad, i vida eterna, con Jesu Cristo, nuestro Señor.

I os quiero avisár de esto, que si, leyendo en vuestro libro, os detuviéreis, por espazio de un cuarto de hora, en la considerazi3n del ser que teneis, como hijo de Adam, considerando vuestra desconfianza, incredulidad, i descuido en esperar a Cristo, la enemistád con Dios, vuestra ambizi3n, ira, arroganzia, i curiosidad, vuestro respeto del mundo, i amor propio;— que os detengais tres horas de tiempo, pongo por caso, en la considerazi3n del sér, que teneis, por Cristo, como hijo de Dios, considerando en vos, lo que considerais en Cristo, i así, considerareis vuestra confianza, fé, esperanza, \*vuestra caridad, humildád, mansedumbre, modestia, i senzilléz, vuestra resoluzi3n con el mundo i con vos mismo, atribuyendo a la incorporazi3n en Cristo, todo lo que conoziéreis en vos, de estos dones de Dios,

i de estas virtudes cristianas. Esto conviene, que hagais así, porque habeis de saber, que aunque os parezca, que la consideración del sér, que teneis, como hijo de Adám, os humille, i os será mas util, que consideraros en el sér, Hijo de Adám. que teneis, como hijo de Dios incorporado en Hijo de Dios. Cristo; sinembargo de esto, es al contrario. f. 76. Porque es así, que la consideración de vuestro propio sér, con humillaros, os haze desconfiár, i estar abatido, i por consiguiente, sin pensamiento: pero la consideración del sér que teneis, por la incorporación en Cristo, con humillaros mucho mas, os haze crezér en la confianza, i estar mui sobre vos, i así solízito, i con pensamiento. I por esto os digo, que pasando lijeramente por la consideración de vuestro propio sér, os pareis mucho en la consideración del sér que teneis por Cristo, sirviéndoos de la consideración de vuestro propio sér, para mas estimár el sér que teneis por Cristo, i para conozer, qué tanto es lo que habeis dejado de vuestro propio sér, i qué tánto, habeis recobrado, del sér que teneis por Cristo: pues que vuestra intenzión, es, mudár,

de tál manera, de costumbres, que podais parezér delante del juizio de Dios, con mucha constanzia i firmeza, en virtud del sér que teneis por Cristo. I así, el sér que teneis de vos, no os es causa de verguenza, ni confusión: porque para esto os es dado, i comunicado el Espíritu Santo, mandado por el mismo Jesu Cristo nuestro Señor.



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# ALFABETO CHRISTIANO.

## REGISTER.

SPANISH	.	.	xvi. and 192 = 208 pages.
ITALIAN	.	.	1 76 2 = . 79 folios.
ENGLISH	.	.	lxxxiv. 246 = 330 pages.
Total	.	.	696 pages.

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